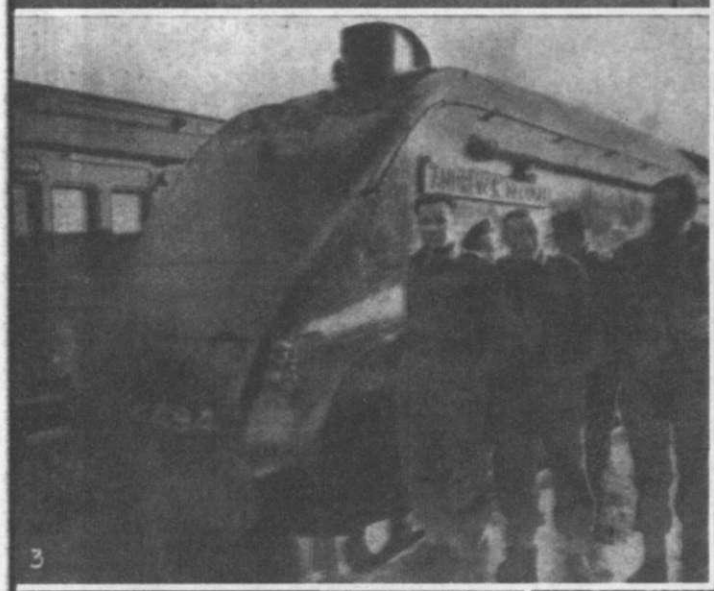
Vol 8 **The War Illustrated** N° 199

SIXPENCE — Edited by Sir John Hammerton — FEBRUARY 2, 1945

ON BOARD THE "BLIGHTY EXPRESS," London-bound from a southern port, men of the British Army of Liberation, aided by the ever-ready Naafi, celebrated in the buffet-car the beginning of their 7-days home leave (the first since D-Day), which began on January 1, 1945. Leave was balloted for among units serving in France, Belgium and Holland. To be eligible a soldier must have served abroad for six months. Special trains equipped with canteens were run from the landing ports. *Photo, New York Times Photos*

Our Roving Camera Greets the Home-Leave Men



FIRST BATCH OF D-DAY MEN ON 7-DAYS' HOME LEAVE raised a mighty cheer as the transport docked at a southern port (1) on the night of January 1, 1945. Off the ship, a Welsh N.C.O. was one of several who telephoned home (2). Some travelled north in a luxury train drawn by a specially-labelled streamlined engine (3). At a London terminus a Tommy on leave from Burma proudly displayed a Japanese sword (4). The 4½-year-old daughter of Lance-Corporal F. Burford, of Balham, tried on the shoes her father had brought from Holland (5). Congleton, Lancs, welcomed its local V.C.—Sergeant G. H. Eardley. —with cheers, flags, bunting and banners (6). See also page 577.

Photos, Topical Press, G.P.U., Central Press, Daily Mirror, Fox

THE BATTLE FRONTS

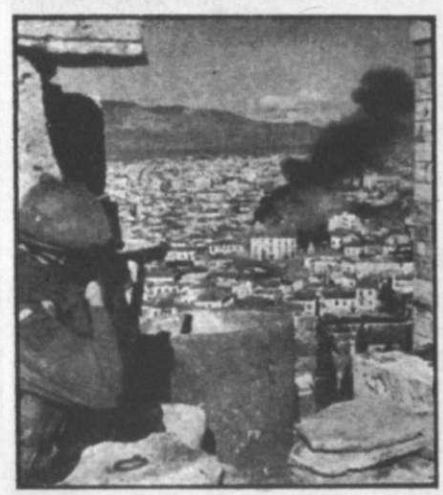
by Maj.-Gen. Sir Charles Gwynn, K.C.B., D.S.O.

VON RUNDSTEDT's offensive has been a severe shock to our complacency, but I think I can claim that I was not unduly optimistic when a fortnight ago I wrote that I expected that his success would be short-lived. In the first week of the New Year it became evident that he had definitely failed to achieve any of the more ambitious objects it may have had. He struck us a shrewd blow and sent us reeling back in some confusion, as Field-Marshal Montgomery has admitted, but our recovery has been rapid. There can be no doubt that Rundstedt had pinned his hopes on the success of his initial blow, for which he had used his best troops and practically the whole of his strategic reserve, made as strong as possible. But presumably he had always intended to make subsidiary attacks to exploit success when the Allies were compelled to suspend their previous offensive operations and to use their reserves in counter-measures against his main thrust.

For such subsidiary attacks his troops that had been on the defensive could then turn to the offensive, utilizing their local reserves which it would not have been safe to withdraw to take part in the major operation. The counter-offensive he has delivered against the U.S. 7th Army in the Palatinate is clearly a subsidiary operation of this nature, although owing to the failure of his main offensive it is probably designed rather to limit the Allied counter-measures than to exploit the initial success in the Ardennes.

AT the time I write Rundstedt, aided by the weather, which has reduced air co-operation to a minimum, is withdrawing under pressure in the Ardennes salient, but his subsidiary offensive in the Palatinate, though it has been checked, has not definitely been brought to a standstill. The question which naturally invites speculation is, what will he do now? Will he revert to the defensive, withdrawing altogether from the Ardennes salient which clearly has no value as a permanent defensive position, for it would always be a source of danger and entail a considerable lengthening of the line to be held? A cautious general would almost certainly withdraw, especially as an improvement in the weather would release the Allied Air Force for a devastating attack on his forces in the salient, unprotected by permanent fortifications, and with restricted lines of communication. But there are as yet no signs that his withdrawal will be complete, and since he had openly announced to his troops when he launched his attack that they were to make a final effort to win the war, it is safer to assume he may still make a desperate attempt to recover the initiative.

That he has any chance of doing so successfully I cannot believe, but that he will make the attempt seems probable if only because of the shattering reactions on German morale a definite reversion to the defensive would cause. There is ample evidence that the counter-offensive and its initial success restored a shaken morale to a notable degree, but admission of the failure of a proclaimed final effort could hardly fail to damp the spirits of even the most fanatical troops. Rundstedt has his back to the wall, and however hopeless he may realize the struggle to be I am convinced he will go down fighting with all the offensive spirit that is traditional in the German army, even if it should accelerate final disaster. What form his final effort may take it is impossible to predict; the Ardennes salient clearly no longer provides a springboard for a renewal of his original plan, but he may cling to what remains of it as a bait to draw in the bulk of the Allied forces.



IN ATHENS, before the truce between General Scobie and the E.L.A.S. forces came into operation on January 14, 1945, a British sniper was interested in insurgent troops as they hurriedly left a burning building.
Photo, British Official

LOOKING for Opportunity to Catch Montgomery on the Wrong Foot

The terrain is highly defensible, and the defence is being increasingly confided to infantry formations. He may therefore be withdrawing his armoured formations secretly for employment elsewhere, or be massing them for a major tactical counter-stroke. In the one case they may reappear on another sector of the front, possibly to strengthen his offensive in Alsace. In the other, he may be looking for an opportunity to catch Montgomery on the wrong foot—though that I do not think will be easy, for the way in which Montgomery tidied up a confused situation and brought about the recovery which has placed the Allies again on the offensive should give us every confidence in his leadership.

We who for so many days had had to depend on the scraps of belated and often confusing information which were allowed to come through the screen of security silence should be very grateful to the Field-Marshal for the very clear picture he gave to correspondents of the stages by which the recovery was effected, and of the factors on which it depended. We had, I think, realized that the defence organized and conducted by the U.S. 1st Army on the Monschau-Stavelot front, and the gallant resistance offered by isolated American detachments, had made a great contribution to recovery by slowing down Rundstedt's thrust and forcing it to change direction. We had admired, too, the characteristic speed and vigour of General Patton's counter-offensive against Rundstedt's left flank, but I think only professional soldiers can have appreciated the more complicated situation on the north side of the salient which made the organization of a well co-ordinated counter-stroke difficult.

I IMAGINE many people wondered why a counter-offensive on this flank was not synchronized with General Patton's drive immediately. But it must now be recognized that not only had the situation to be stabilized on General Hodges' 1st Army front which had borne the weight of Rundstedt's attack, but that in the development of counter-measures four armies were concerned, and that the assembly of formations to provide a striking force involved difficult movements across congested lines of communication al

LUZON ISLAND, in the Philippines, where General MacArthur made a successful surprise landing on Jan. 9, 1945 (see heavy black line above), in what was described as "one of the biggest amphibious operations of the war." *By courtesy of the News Chronicle*

under separate commands. The obvious necessity of placing the whole operation under the control of a single commander was at once realized by General Eisenhower, and that it was carried through as speedily as it was, and without confusion, gives proof of clear planning and admirable staff work. In General Patton's case the problem was simpler, because he was employing his own reserves. Nevertheless, his change of front and delivery of attack in a new direction so promptly was an outstanding feat.

Rundstedt has, of course, succeeded in so far as he has disturbed General Eisenhower's original plans and compelled him to suspend his previous offensives on the Roer and Saar fronts. But the Allies are now engaged in a new offensive. A large part of Rundstedt's strategic reserve has already been expended, and what remains is still committed to a fight from which he may find it difficult to disengage. His losses, already heavy, may therefore continue to mount rapidly. That might be compensated to some extent by a reduction in the rate of attrition on the Roer and Saar fronts, but replacement of the high-class personnel and special armaments of picked divisions must become increasingly difficult. The truth is the Germans, both in west and in east, are making a somewhat reckless use of their reserves.

IN Hungary they used them prodigally in a belated attempt to rescue the remains of the Budapest garrison, apparently mainly with the object of avoiding the loss of prestige its surrender would involve; for they have clearly no intention of re-occupying the city or of establishing a defensive front again on the Danube if they succeed. Failure in either case may leave gaps which will be difficult to fill. This readiness to expend their reserves is characteristic of the extreme offensive doctrines on which the German army is taught to rely, and it has on many occasions in Russia got them into trouble. There they were generally able to escape the worst consequences by skilful evasive manoeuvre, but neither in the west nor east is there now room for retreat without exposing German territory. The extreme offensive doctrine therefore fits badly with Hitler's plan of contesting every yard of ground in an effort to prolong the death struggle, and Rundstedt's failure, if it can be made complete, may lead to a collapse which would materially shorten the war.

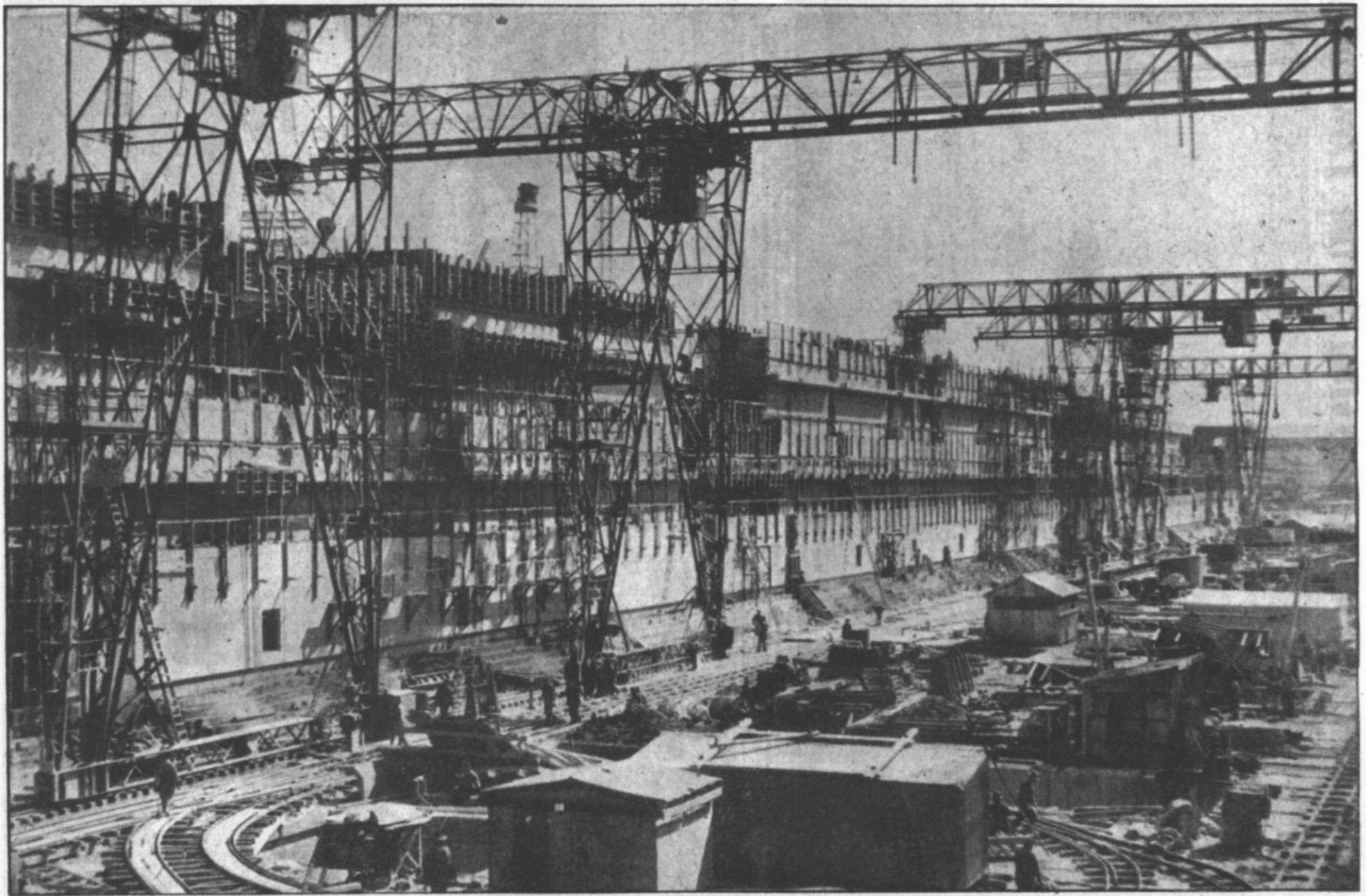
Winter Camouflage for Monty's Men and Armour

SNOW SUITS WERE A GENERAL ISSUE for U.S. troops serving under Field-Marshal Montgomery during the rolling back of the enemy's Ardennes "bulge," the western extremity of which was sealed off by the occupation of Houffalize by the U.S. 1st and 3rd Armies on January 16, 1945. A section of the 30th Division Field Artillery (above) in their snow camouflage near Stavelot (retaken December 21, 1944). Hoping that it will be harder for the wily Hun to spot against the wintry background, a tank man whitewashes his M-4 Sherman (below). PAGE 580 *Photos, Fox*

Snow and Rain Saved the Hun in the Lowlands

FOUL WEATHER IN ALL ITS FORMS, ranging from torrential rains to blinding blizzards, held up Allied operations in Holland and Belgium from early December 1944 until the capture of Laroche, Rundstedt's defensive swivel-point in the Ardennes salient, on January 11, 1945. In flooded Holland, three of our "Water Weasels," amphibious tracked half-ton cargo-carriers (above), demonstrate their adaptability. R.A.F. ground staff (below) sweep the snow from Mitchell medium bombers on a chilly airfield in Belgium.

Photos, British Official



AUSTRALIA'S MAMMOTH NEW GRAVING DOCK, AT SYDNEY—the largest in the southern hemisphere and capable of taking the mightiest ships afloat—was begun in 1941, and will doubtless play an important role in the war against Japan (see pages 560-561, 584-585). One of the towering dock-walls is here seen under construction. The enormous overhead gantries are employed in pouring concrete used in building the walls, and to haul the concrete supplies around the site requires a fleet of miniature locomotives. Bulldozers, mechanical scoops and steam shovels have excavated almost 500,000 tons, including the gouging-out of over 130,000 tons of solid rock. When completed, the dock will cost about £7,000,000 and will make Sydney one of the foremost centres of world trade after the war. *Photo, Royal Australian Navy*

THE WAR AT SEA

by Francis E. McMurtrie

GOLDEN HIND is the name that has been given to the depot that has been established for the Royal Navy at Sydney, the main base of the Pacific Fleet under Admiral Sir Bruce Fraser. Seldom has a happier choice been made by the Admiralty. It was in the Golden Hind, first English ship to sail from the Atlantic into the Pacific, that Drake circumnavigated the world in 1577-1580. At the start of the voyage she was the Pelican, but the name was changed to Golden Hind—the crest of Sir Christopher Hatton, principal patron of the expedition—when Drake entered the Straits of Magellan on August 20, 1578.

It was in the Golden Hind at Deptford that Queen Elizabeth knighted Drake on April 4, 1581. There the old ship was ordered to be laid up for preservation, but in the following century her timbers had decayed and she had to be taken to pieces. Charles II presented a chair made out of the remaining sound wood to Oxford University. Now, after a lapse of 366 years, the name Golden Hind has returned to the Pacific.

DEFINITE confirmation of the loss of the Japanese battleship Musasi is further evidence of the fact that the Battle of the Philippines was a decisive victory. With a displacement of about 45,000 tons and a main armament of nine 16-in. guns in three triple turrets, the Musasi was in the same category as the new United States battleships of the Iowa class, the German Bismarck and Tirpitz, and the British battleship that was launched by Princess Elizabeth on November 30, and which, according to statements from abroad, is named Vanguard.

It appears that the Musasi's magazines blew up after she had been torpedoed from the air. So far as is known, she has only one sister ship in service, the Yamato, which received damage on the same occasion. A third ship of the class may be completing. Otherwise, the Japanese are believed to have only five old battleships left. Thus they cannot muster sufficient strength to intervene effectively in the American invasion of Luzon, which is striking a heavy blow at Japanese prestige.

SUBMARINE-Launched Flying-Bombs With New York as the Target?

Further evidence of enemy weakness at sea is the fact that a convoy of 200 transports intercepted by U.S. aircraft off Camranh Bay, Indo-China, was protected by a slender escort of destroyers and smaller craft, headed by one of the seagoing training ships of the Katori class, which was bombed and sunk. These are ships of 5,800 tons, with a speed of 18 knots and an armament of four 5·5-in. guns and two 5-in. anti-aircraft weapons. The Singapore naval base has been heavily raided by Allied bombers, which also attacked Penang, second city of the Straits Settlements.

Some apprehension has been aroused on the Atlantic seaboard of the United States as the result of a statement made by Admiral Jonas Ingram, to the effect that New York might be attacked by flying bombs from the sea within the next month or two. Though the probability of this was rather discounted by the Navy Department, there has since been a good deal of speculation on the subject. It would not be impossible for flying bombs to be launched from a submarine, though from the point of view of waging effective war it would seem to be a somewhat futile proceeding. Bombs could be carried in some form of hangar on deck, as has been done with aircraft in British and Japanese submarines. It is improbable that more than one, or possibly two, would be accommodated in a single submarine.

Certainly the Germans have been showing greater under-water activity of late, more U-boats having been encountered in the Atlantic during December than for some time past. It is probable that they can still dispose of at least 300 submarines, though all may not be of the latest ocean-going type. A certain percentage have been fitted with the special arrangement of air-intake and exhaust pipes known as the "schnorkel," of which the enemy have boasted so often lately. According to some accounts, these not only enable the batteries of a submarine to be recharged without coming to the surface but have given her the ability to move under water at higher speed.

THOUGH this device may assist U-boats to evade observation it is improbable that it will afford them any permanent advantage, for it is more in the nature of a defensive measure than an offensive one. For the time being it is possible that the hunting of U-boats may become a somewhat longer and more difficult job; but even if the enemy boasts that U-boats can now remain submerged for as long as a month be true, it is not going to help the Germans much in the long run. Submarine crews that are always striving to keep below water in case they may be spotted are scarcely likely to become enthusiasts for attack. Those with the most enterprising captains will take greater risks and thus will have a shorter life, leaving the cautious still more inclined to evasive tactics.

That the Japanese Navy is not the only enemy with which Allied naval forces have to contend in the Pacific is shown by the announcement earlier this month that three U.S. destroyers had been lost in a typhoon in the Western Pacific. One of these, the Spence, of 2,100 tons, was launched as recently as 1942. She was one of over 150 vessels of the Fletcher type, armed with five 5-in. and several smaller guns, besides depth charges and ten torpedo tubes. Her complement numbered about 250 officers and men. The other two destroyers, the Hull and Monaghan, were sister ships of 1,395 tons, launched during 1934-35. They had four 5-in. guns and eight torpedo tubes, and a complement of over 200 each.

ICE-COVERED DESTROYER on convoy duty in Northern waters. The crew are seen applying a touch of "ship-shape and Bristol-fashion" to their frost-bound vessel.
Photo, British Official

THESE are not the first United States warships lost in heavy weather during the present war. In the Atlantic coast hurricane of September 14 last the destroyer Warrington, of 1,850 tons, two Coast Guard vessels and a small minesweeper, the YMS 409, foundered. In February 1942, an older destroyer, the Truxtun, of 1,190 tons, was wrecked in a gale on the coast of Newfoundland, together with the supply ship Pollux. Early in 1943 a converted minesweeper, the Nightingale, was lost in a gale off the coast of Oregon; and in the same region another minesweeper, the YMS 133, capsized a few weeks afterwards. Two motor torpedo-boats, PT 31 and PT 33, were sunk through running on to reefs in the Philippines during January and February 1942; and a submarine rescue vessel, the Macaw, met her end through striking a coral reef in the Pacific in February 1944. In June 1942, the storeship Capella was lost in unreported circumstances off Narragansett. A small Coast Guard cutter, the Wilcox, foundered in a gale off the Atlantic seaboard in September 1943. With a fleet (including landing craft) of some 6,000 units, it is inevitable that a certain number of such casualties should occur.

AFTER A DARING RAID IN THE AEGEAN, these officers of one of H.M motor-launches display their trophies, including the ensigns of a German schooner and its escort vessel. On offensive night patrol they boarded and captured two ships of an enemy convoy nearing its destination. On the extreme left is the motor-launch's 23-year-old commanding officer, Sub-Lieut. Robin A. Barr, R.N.V.R.
Photo, British Official

Proud Record of the Royal Australian Navy

Ever since the outbreak of war in 1939, vessels of the R.A.N. have been vigorously assaulting the enemy. Great renown has come to many of her ships, especially by way of Mediterranean exploits ; but, as ADRIAN BALL here writes—specially for " The War Illustrated "—much remains to be told of great doings in the Pacific, where today the R.A.N. is fighting—stronger than ever.

WHEN war broke out in the Pacific on December 7, 1941, the strength of the R.A.N. was deployed throughout the Mediterranean, the Indian and Pacific Oceans. The "N" class destroyers were in the Mediterranean, destroyers and corvettes were on patrol duties around the Australian coast, and larger units were searching for enemy raiders in the Indian Ocean. Because of the shortage of British escort vessels in the Far East at that time, the destroyer Vampire and the fleet minesweepers Burnie, Bendigo, Goulburn and Maryborough were engaged in patrol and escort duties in Malayan waters when Japan struck at Pearl Harbour. These minesweepers are often referred to in Australia as corvettes, but actually their design corresponds closely with that of the "Bangor" class sweepers of the R.N. and R.C.N.

On December 10 the Vampire, fighting with a group of R.N. destroyers escorting H.M.S. Prince of Wales and Repulse, rescued 22 survivors from those two ships. Her next encounter with the enemy came on the night of January 26–27. In company with H.M.S. Thanet, the Vampire attacked a Japanese force of one cruiser and three destroyers off Endau in the Malay Peninsula. In the fight which followed one large Japanese destroyer was sunk, and the Thanet was lost.

Famous Battle of the Java Sea

During January 1942 the cruisers Perth and Hobart, the sloop Yarra and the minesweepers Ballarat, Toowoomba and Woollongong reinforced this little squadron. These minesweepers took part in the evacuation of Sumatra, rendering sterling service at Oosthaven, Merula and Palembang.

H.M.A.S. Perth formed part of an Allied force which was thrown into action against a superior Japanese fleet on February 27. In this great fight, destined to go down in history as the Battle of the Java Sea, the Allied fleet was all but annihilated. The R.N. lost the cruiser Exeter and the destroyers Electra, Encounter and Jupiter ; the U.S.N. lost the cruiser Houston and destroyer Pope ; and the R. Netherlands Navy the cruisers De Ruyter and Java and the destroyers Evertsen and Kortenaer. After surviving the battle itself, the Perth (in company with the Houston and Evertsen) attempted to slip through Sunda Strait in darkness, but went down fighting an overwhelmingly strong force.

WHEN it was seen that resistance in Java could not be prolonged, the minesweepers were ordered to evacuate personnel from Tjilatjap. Braving the enemy bombers and surface craft, they accomplished their task and carried out efficient demolition. While escorting a convoy back to Australia, the Yarra was attacked by a force of three heavy cruisers and four destroyers. Lieut.-Cmdr. Rankin laid down a smoke screen to give the merchant ships a chance, and the Yarra met a glorious death, her three 4-in. guns barking defiance at the heavy cruisers and destroyers. Although put out of action quickly, the sloop did not sink for over two hours ; thirteen of her gallant crew were picked up by a Dutch submarine and taken to Colombo. A similar fate befell H.M. destroyer Stronghold and the U.S.S. Edsall, Peary and Asheville. After continuous attacks by bombers the minesweepers eventually reached Australia.

Between May 4 and May 8, 1942, Australian warships fought for the first time in home waters in the series of actions known as the Battle of the Coral Sea, which saved Port Moresby and, incidentally, Australia from invasion. This series of engagements began when U.S. planes struck at Japanese warships and transports at Tulagi. On May 7 a second raid was made on Jap forces in the Louisiade Archipelago ; the following day the Japs made a furious counter-attack, sinking the U.S. aircraft carrier Lexington. Meanwhile, the Australian squadron, which included the Australia and the Hobart, was withstanding a terrific attack by bombers and torpedo bombers. The attack failed, the squadron suffering neither casualties nor damage. Japanese losses for the action included the aircraft carrier Shoho, a cruiser, and several other vessels, mostly transports, in addition to vessels seriously damaged. On the night of August 8, 1942, a force of Allied cruisers was caught in a surprise attack by Japanese destroyers and cruisers. In this action, known as the Battle of Savo Island, the R.A.N. lost the Canberra, the U.S.N. the cruisers Vincennes, Quincy and Astoria, all torpedoed—a severe blow for the Allies at a critical period in the war in the Pacific.

Commodore H. B. FARNCOMB, D.S.O., R.A.N., took command of the Australian squadron when Commodore J. A. Collins, R.A.N., was wounded in H.M.A.S. Australia off Leyte in October 1944. *Photo, R.A.N.*

During 1942 the Japanese began to harass lines of communication between Australia and the U.S., and Australian and American warships accounted for at least 8 submarines. On May 31 four midget submarines entered Sydney Harbour. They were detected by vessels of the auxiliary patrol and destroyed by Australian motor launches of the " Fairmile " type. Then came the turning-point in the Allied fortunes, with Australian victories in the Owen Stanley Range and at Milne Bay, and U.S. successes in Guadalcanal. The submarine menace was nullified by the convoy system, H.M. Australian ships escorting 6,000 vessels of 25 million tons with the loss of only 10 ships in one year of war. Numbers of Japanese warships and transports were destroyed in battles in the Solomons area, and the Allies swept into the offensive.

IN this offensive the R.A.N. has taken a leading part. Its policy for the last 18 months has been, broadly, to keep the sea-lanes open, while sending the larger units into battle. These "larger units" have been the heavy cruisers Shropshire (presented by the R.N. to replace the lost Canberra) and Australia, and the Australian-built "Tribal" type destroyers, Arunta and Warramunga. On November 29–30 the two last-named ships took part in the attack on Gasmata. The heavy cruisers and the two "Tribals" figured prominently in the attack on Arawe, New Britain. The assault transport (infantry landing ship) Westralia also played a great part.

When U.S. troops invaded the Admiralty Islands at Seeadler and Hauwei the Shropshire and Warramunga were in the van. Meanwhile the "N" class destroyers were serving with the Eastern fleet and took part in attacks on Sabang, Sumatra. The destroyer Quiberon then returned to join the R.A.N. in the Pacific, after a highly successful record in the Mediterranean. Approximately 12½ per cent of the total personnel of the R.A.N. were engaged in the landings at Tanamera, Hollandia, Aitape, and Humboldt Bay, when U.S. and Australian troops "leap-frogged" over hundreds of miles of Jap-occupied territory to Dutch New Guinea. Australian vessels engaged included the cruisers Shropshire and Australia, the destroyers Arunta and Warramunga, the assault transports Manoora, Westralia and Kanimbla, the armed surveying vessel Moresby, the rescue tug Reserve, the minesweepers Benalla and Shepperton, and two auxiliary vessels, Cape Leeuwin and Polaris. With H.M.A.S. Moresby, the two corvettes and the two last-named vessels formed a survey group which carefully mapped out the coastline prior to the Allied landings.

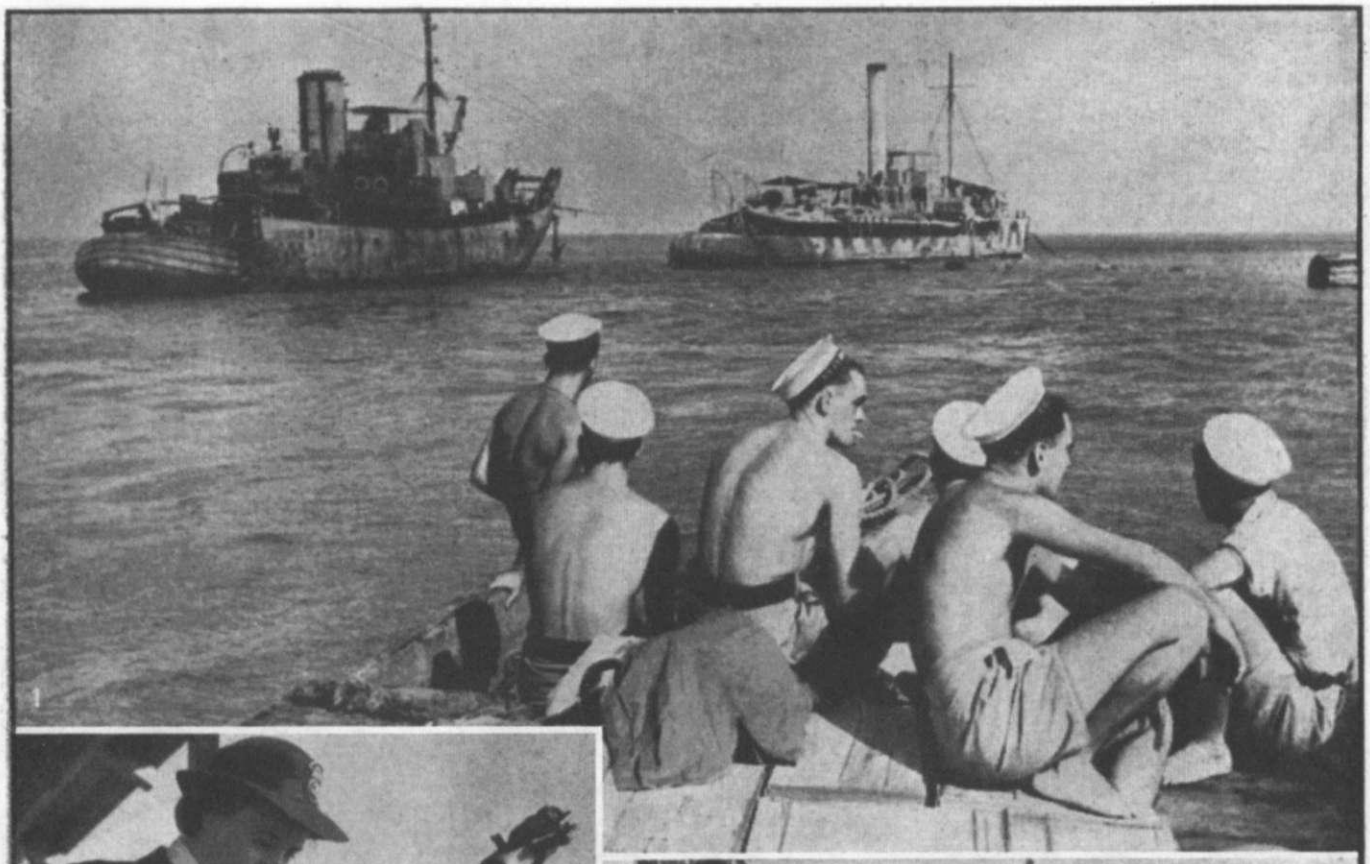
Bataan Has Joined Her Sisters

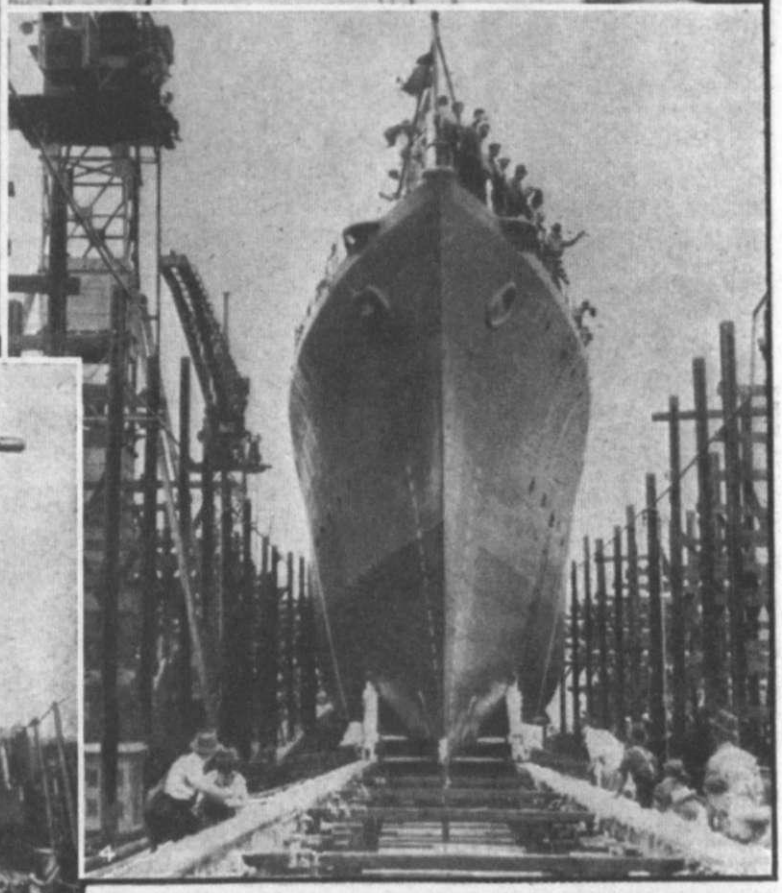
During the last few months most of the R.A.N. has returned for service in Pacific waters—Norman, Napier, and Nizam from the Eastern fleet, and minesweepers such as the Cairns, Ipswich, Tamworth, and Launceston, which did useful work in the Mediterranean. One of the latter, H.M.A.S. Bundaberg, played a lone hand in the occupation of Sek Island on April 26 of last year. The following day the same vessel in the company of the destroyer Vendetta and escorted by Fairmiles carried Australian troops to Madang and Alexishaven, which they occupied within a few hours. The first of the Australian-built frigates to arrive in New Guinea waters, the Barcoo, took part in the bombardment before the Australian occupation of Karkar Islands and Bunabun alongside minesweepers Stawell and Kapunda.

Today the R.A.N., fighting in the Pacific, is stronger than ever. All the "N" and "Q" class destroyers are there, and another Tribal, the Bataan, has joined her sisters, the forerunner of others. The minesweeper programme of 60 vessels has been completed, and frigates are coming off the stocks in ever-increasing numbers. More " Fairmiles " are being built to sweep what is left of the Japanese landing craft from the seas. At least 230 vessels have been built in Australian yards since the outbreak of war. A £6,750,000 graving dock, to accommodate the largest vessels in the British and U.S. fleets, has been built in Sydney (see illus. page 582), and a £1,000,000 dock at Brisbane. In the year from November 1942 to November 1943, 13,815,099 tons of Allied shipping were repaired in Australian docks. In December 1944 Admiral Sir Bruce Fraser's newly formed British Pacific Fleet based on Australia found a tough, strong, experienced R.A.N. ready — and proud and superbly equipped—to fight alongside it !

The next development in the progress of the R.A.N. will be the construction of a cruiser in a Commonwealth shipyard. As the guns and armour are to be made in Australia, this ship is likely to take five years to build.

Aussies Prepare to Erase Japs from the Pacific





ALREADY FAMED IN ACHIEVEMENT the Royal Australian Navy (see facing page), is preparing for the final show-down with the Japanese. Taking stores to the "gate" ships on boom-defence duty (1) at a Commonwealth port. An Australian Wren petty officer (2) checks Verey cartridges at a naval base. In action off New Guinea the gunner of a Fairmile motor launch takes a crack at the enemy with his ·50 Browning machine-gun (3). H.M.A.S. Bataan destroyer of the Tribal class (4), slides down the slipway. Guns of an Australian naval squadron supported Gen. MacArthur's landings on Luzon, Jan. 9, 1945.

Photos, Royal Australian Navy

New Line-Up of Armies to Crack Belgian Bulge

ACROSS THE ARDENNES SNOWS, U.S. troops, not yet issued with winter camouflage (see page 580), approach the front-line (1). British infantry—who, with armoured units, it was announced on January 4, 1945, had joined in to halt Von Rundstedt's drive—wait for the order to attack near Marche (2). Field-Marshal Montgomery (3), after taking over the U.S. 1st and 9th Armies in the salient in December 1944, with his generals. Left to right, Lieut.-Gen. Sir Miles Dempsey, G.O.C. British 2nd Army; Maj.-Gen. Hodges, U.S. 1st Army; "Monty"; Maj.-Gen. Simpson, U.S. 9th Army; General Crerar, Canadian 1st Army. A 155-mm. gun (4) of the U.S. 3rd Army being cleaned. Forces of the U.S. 1st and 3rd Armies, approaching from the north and west respectively, entered Houffalize, pivotal point of the bulge, on January 16. (See map p. 601.)

Photos, British Official; British Newspaper Pool, Fox

Gay Setting for Our Troops on Paris Leave

PALATIAL DINING-ROOM OF THE GRAND HOTEL, PARIS, provides a dazzling change for our fighting men on leave. They have been using it since the building was transformed into the Allied Expeditionary Forces Club. During the German occupation the French waiters refused to serve meals here, declaring that they did not wish to be killed by falling chandeliers in the event of R.A.F. raids. The real reason, of course, was their implacable hatred of the invaders.

Photo, Associated Press

The Price Norway is Paying for Her Liberation

After nearly five years of Nazi oppression and exploitation a piece of Norway almost as big as Scotland is being freed. But the cost of this newly-won liberty is high indeed, and how Norwegians are struggling to restore some semblance of normal life to their ruthlessly devastated country is told by R. B. NYQUIST in this article specially written for "The War Illustrated."

Do not imagine that that liberated territory is in any way comparable with other liberated parts of Europe. It is not, for Finmark, as the area is called, is the northernmost county in Norway, lies well within the Arctic Circle, and its civilization—the most northerly in the world—has been built up only at great cost and over a period of hundreds of years. The pre-war population of this vast tract of Arctic country was only about 60,000 people, mainly fishermen operating from the scores of little hamlets along the rugged coastline, and small farmers.

The liberation of Finmark has caused the deportation of nearly 40,000 of those people, and the almost complete destruction of their formerly prosperous little towns, fishing villages and farmsteads—even mountain holiday huts. Places like Berlevaag, Gamvik, Honningsvag, Hammerfest, Lakselv, and Alta no longer exist. This Arctic front—it may almost be called the forgotten front—is far away and the distances to it and on it are tremendous. Communications are few and the German destruction there has been thorough. Thus it is only now—over three months since Red Army troops stormed across the frontier in chase of Rendulic's Finnish Army, and put them and other German forces totalling altogether about 120,000 men to flight in North Norway—that a fairly complete picture of the situation in this Arctic country can be painted.

It is a grim picture, but one, nevertheless, which means the liberation of Norway has begun. If, however, the Germans are allowed to carry out their scorched earth policy down the whole length of Norway, the country will be ruined. As it is, it will be a great many years before economic life in Finmark can be resumed. Norwegian troops now in Finmark, working shoulder to shoulder with their Russian comrades-in-arms, are doing everything in their power to open up the communications which will allow them to get to grips with the Germans, who are now believed to be holding the Lyngenfjord line, north of Tromsö—about 600 miles from the starting point of the retreat. But Finmark is in the grip of Arctic winter, with deep snow and cold reaching as much as 30 degrees below zero. The only road has to be cleared of German-made devastation, bridges have to be rebuilt and ferries across the fjords devised. Every piece of material necessary to carry out these repairs has to be shipped great distances and then transported by road.

When Allied troops do catch up with the Germans, the latter may continue their withdrawal in a blaze of destruction, and this may well be carried right down the thousand-mile length of the country. Norwegians, therefore, believe that the only way to prevent complete devastation of Norway is by an Allied operation from the west—an operation which will sever the slim German communications, put a stop to premeditated destruction, and at the same time keep eight or ten divisions from the western front whither German soldiers in Norway are now making their way—and at their own pace. When the time comes for this operation, orders will be given to the Norwegian Forces of the Interior to cut the enemy lines of communication on land in order to drive the enemy out on to the sea. Crown Prince Olav, the Norwegian C.-in-C., has already told this to his countrymen at home.

The liberation of Norway began with the capture by the Red Army of Kirkenes, the Germans' biggest Arctic military base—it was a naval depot, army headquarters in the north, and Luftwaffe base from which attacks were made against the Russia-bound convoys. When this port fell after a brilliant Russian outflanking move, Rendulic, the German general who brought his Lapland army of about eight divisions out of Finland, knew that his position in Finmark had now become untenable. The Red Army was advancing right across Finland, which has an almost 600-mile-long frontier with Norway, and unless the Germans could pull right out of Finmark and North Tromsö they would be in danger of being cut off. Complete evacuation and a ruthless scorched earth policy was ordered. No shelter was to be left anywhere

Hr. TERJE WOLD, Minister of Justice and first member of the Norwegian Government to return to Eastern Finmark, Norway's northernmost province, until recently under the Nazi heel. *Photo, Royal Norwegian Govt.*

which could be used by the Russians—or the Norwegian civilians; all food stocks, all boats, all cattle which could not be carried away as loot were to be destroyed.

The Germans were in such a hurry to get out of Eastern Finmark, however, that they did not have time to do all these things thoroughly. They fired Kirkenes before they fled—only 26 houses were left standing—and they destroyed the ironworks there (the damage to these works alone has since been estimated at over three million pounds). But the majority of the Norwegian civilians there escaped deportation. When the battle had approached, these people hid in the iron mines at Björnevatn, some miles outside Kirkenes, or in the countryside. Only those who could be rounded up immediately—such as prisoner of war slave workers—were driven westwards with the retreating army.

Between 18,000 and 20,000 Norwegian civilians in Eastern Finmark escaped, and hoisted their flags among the ruins, greeted the Russian soldiers as liberators, and then helped them in every possible way to continue their advance. The Germans pushed on westwards, and as they put some distance between themselves and the Russians their pace slowed and with devilish precision they began to destroy, loot, and round-up civilians. At every fishing port they reached they commandeered all seaworthy craft. Into these they packed as much war equipment as they could; if there was any remaining room civilians were crammed aboard to be taken hundreds of miles round the North Cape and down the stormy coast under unbearable conditions. Short of food, and suffering from exposure, a great army of men, women and children did not survive the nightmare journeys.

Those who were not deported by boat were ordered to march in columns. Nazi sadism was at its height during this evacuation. Norwegians were forced, just for the delight of the Germans, to watch their homes and their possessions go up in flames. People who refused to leave their homes were shot, and many who had managed to escape to the mountains were later hounded down and taken away. During the forced marches, sandwiched between Nazi troops in wagons and trucks, many Norwegians died. Hardy though they are, they could not face the rigours of days of forced marching over an Arctic road swept by a searing wind and fierce snowstorms. That, briefly, is what happened all the way from Vardö down to Tromsö. It was in Tromsö Fjord that the Tirpitz met her fate (see page 477).

Tromsö was the first assembly point, but the evacuation and deportation has by no means ceased here. Thousands of Norwegians are being funnelled farther south, and 200,000 are threatened. Meanwhile, all those German soldiers not required to hold the Lyngenfjord line are believed to be passing south by road and fishing boats to Mosjoen, the most northerly railhead in Norway. Then in comparative comfort those who are not needed are being taken back to Germany to defend the Fatherland.

Meanwhile, Norwegians in Finmark are struggling hard to restore some semblance of normal life. Norwegian troops were dispatched from this country as soon as the Russian advance became known, and at 10 a.m. on November 10, 1944, the first of them crossed the frontier from Russia into Norway. After nearly five years' impatient waiting and training in Britain they were on Norwegian soil again. Norwegian inhabitants had already begun to do everything they could to restore something approaching reasonable conditions, and public officials who had been removed by the Germans during occupation were reinstated. Since then the first urgently needed supplies of food, clothing, and medical requirements have arrived, but life is still far from easy.

Although it is believed that most of Norway north of the Lyngen Line is now clear of Germans—except perhaps for a few bands of S.S. rearguards left to complete their destruction—the coastline is by no means immune from further German terror actions. Of those Norwegians in liberated territory a large number are volunteering for the armed forces. They have something to avenge, and Hr. Terje Wold, Norwegian Minister of Justice, summed up their attitude when he said on his return from Finmark:

"The inhuman conduct of the Germans will undoubtedly have an influence on the fight of the Norwegians both at home and abroad. Anything is better than to let them burn our country unhindered, step by step. We will do everything we can to make our contribution towards preventing this from happening, and our view coincides completely with that of the Russians. Every possible effort from abroad, every reasonable counter-measure from within, must be made in Norway's continued fight."

Retreating Nazis in Finmark Burn and Destroy

IN NORWAY'S northernmost province of Finmark (see map) grim were the scenes as the Germans retreated before the Red Army advancing through Finland after the capture of Kirkenes on October 25, 1944. Driving the peasantry before them, the Germans burnt and destroyed savagely (see facing page).

For 4½ years the Germans' biggest Arctic base, Kirkenes, ice-free all the year round, was invaluable to them. In peacetime it supplied 70 per cent of Norway's iron ore. Not a house was left standing in Berlevaag (1) where of a population of 1,600 only 70 remained. At Gamvik this rough wood-and-earth structure (2), with an upturned boat for roof, housed eight people, two cows and a goat. King Haakon's proclamation announcing Soviet-Norwegian collaboration was read (3) at Havningberg. First Norwegian troops (4) marching into Kirkenes. Operating independently of direct Russian support, Norwegian forces were reported on Jan. 17, 1945, to have advanced 125 miles west of Kirkenes and to have captured the airfield at Banak.

Photos, Norwegian Official Keystone

VIEWS & REVIEWS

Of Vital War Books

by Hamilton Fyfe

THERE is a fine phrase in the British official report on the Battle of El Alamein—a phrase with a touch of poetry in it which you don't expect to find in documents of this kind.

"The 9th Australian Division," it says, "put up a magnificent effort. They fought themselves and the enemy to a standstill, till flesh and blood could stand no more."

Well, what do you expect after that? To be told that the Division had to be withdrawn or that the survivors were compelled by sheer physical exhaustion to surrender? Not a bit of it. The report goes on—and here the touch of poetry comes in— "Then they went on fighting." Flesh and blood could stand no more, but "they went on fighting." Their persistence, their dogged refusal to allow Nature to call a halt to their efforts, contributed to the victory of El Alamein.

THAT illustrates one of the characteristics of the Australian soldier. Another is his astonishing adaptability. In a booklet recently published for the Australian Army Staff by H.M. Stationery Office, entitled The Australian Army at War (9d.), there is a brief, matter-of-fact reference to the adventures of a battalion cut off during the fighting in Greece, in April 1941, that ghastly blunder undertaken for mistaken reasons of political "honour." This battalion "withdrew to mountainous country and in small parties made its way to the coast. Some were captured, but a surprisingly large number reached safety. A substantial party, disciplined and under command of its own officers, arrived in Palestine months afterwards."

AUSTRALIAN COMMANDOS IN TIMOR—an illustration from the booklet reviewed in this page. The Commonwealth Government dispatched troops to help the Dutch hold this East Indian island in the Sundra group four days after the Japanese had struck at Pearl Harbour. *Photo, Australian Official*

I happen to know something about that journey lasting for months. I doubt if any other unit in any army could have done it. Not that the Australians were hardier, or braver, than other troops. It was their resourcefulness that stuck out, their quick acceptance of new conditions, their ingenious surmounting of obstacles, the mood half-playful, half-grim, in which they tackled the most tremendous difficulties. I wish the booklet could have gone into that adventure a little more fully.

I first came to understand the qualities of Australian soldiers when I stayed with them on the Somme in 1918. The earliest impression

The Australian Army at War

made on me then, before I had been with them twelve hours, was caused by the enormous amount of tea they drank. Tea first thing in the morning, tea last thing at night, tea at every meal and between meals. I had never seen anything like it—not even in Yorkshire. The old type of British Tommy, the Mulvaneys and Learoyds and Ortherises of Kipling's great book, Soldiers Three, would have sneered at this. But if they had gone into action with the Aussies, if they had been on patrol with them in No Man's Land on pitch-black nights, if they had gone with them to carry out the order, "Get some German prisoners!" and seen how they burst into the enemy trenches and secured their prey, from whom information was wanted—they wouldn't have sneered then: they would have admitted with enthusiasm that, like Alan Breck, in Stevenson's Kidnapped, every one was a "bonny fighter."

THEY seemed to know by instinct what to do. That was largely the explanation of what appeared to some observers of the old school to be lax discipline. Partly this was due to the absence among them of those stiff and stupid class distinctions which in so many armies keep officers and men apart. The Australian officer is like one of those people who in civil life are given authority in business or industry, in a steel-making plant or a shipbuilding yard. While they are on the job they exact instant obedience to orders, but off duty they put on no side; they do not assume airs of social superiority—they are just men. This works so well in the Australian Army, as I have seen it work well also in the Russian army, that I should like to see it followed everywhere.

But, as I have suggested, it is partly the Australian soldier's instinct for knowing what to do which accounts for the less oppressive insistence on spit and polish, saluting, mechanical precision, which prevails among them. Once I had an amusing experience of the Aussie's ability to deal with any situation. Some British soldiers had secured a sheep's carcase, they were hungry, the meat would be in good condition—but they had no idea what to do with the sheep in order to get their teeth into that meat! A few Australians happened along. Instantly they set to work, and within an hour or two a savoury stew was ready.

It is not altogether a result of wider experience. It owes a good deal to the sublime self-confidence of the Australian. He believes he can do anything and if you believe that strongly enough you can. The Aussies don't sit down before obstacles. Sometimes they don't take enough time considering how best the impediment can be cleared away. They just go in and clear it away. In the jungle fighting on New Guinea this "dash-and-be-damned-to-you" spirit was vastly effective. No matter how toughly the Japanese tried to defend themselves, they had to give way time after time until the threat of an invasion of Australia had been finally removed.

HERE is one example of the swift and fierce actions in the New Guinea campaign. It was the Battle of Gorari, which gave to "an evil-smelling and unhygienic jungle the name of Death Valley." Five hundred Japanese fresh troops just brought into the line died there. Their lines of communication were systematically cut in several places and then "the Australians closed in, killing off the enemy in scores in almost continual close fighting. The bayonet was used and 150 Japanese protected by earthworks were killed in the first charge. Then followed the mopping-up and encirclement and destruction of pockets, trapping and annihilating an enemy who was still vicious when cornered."

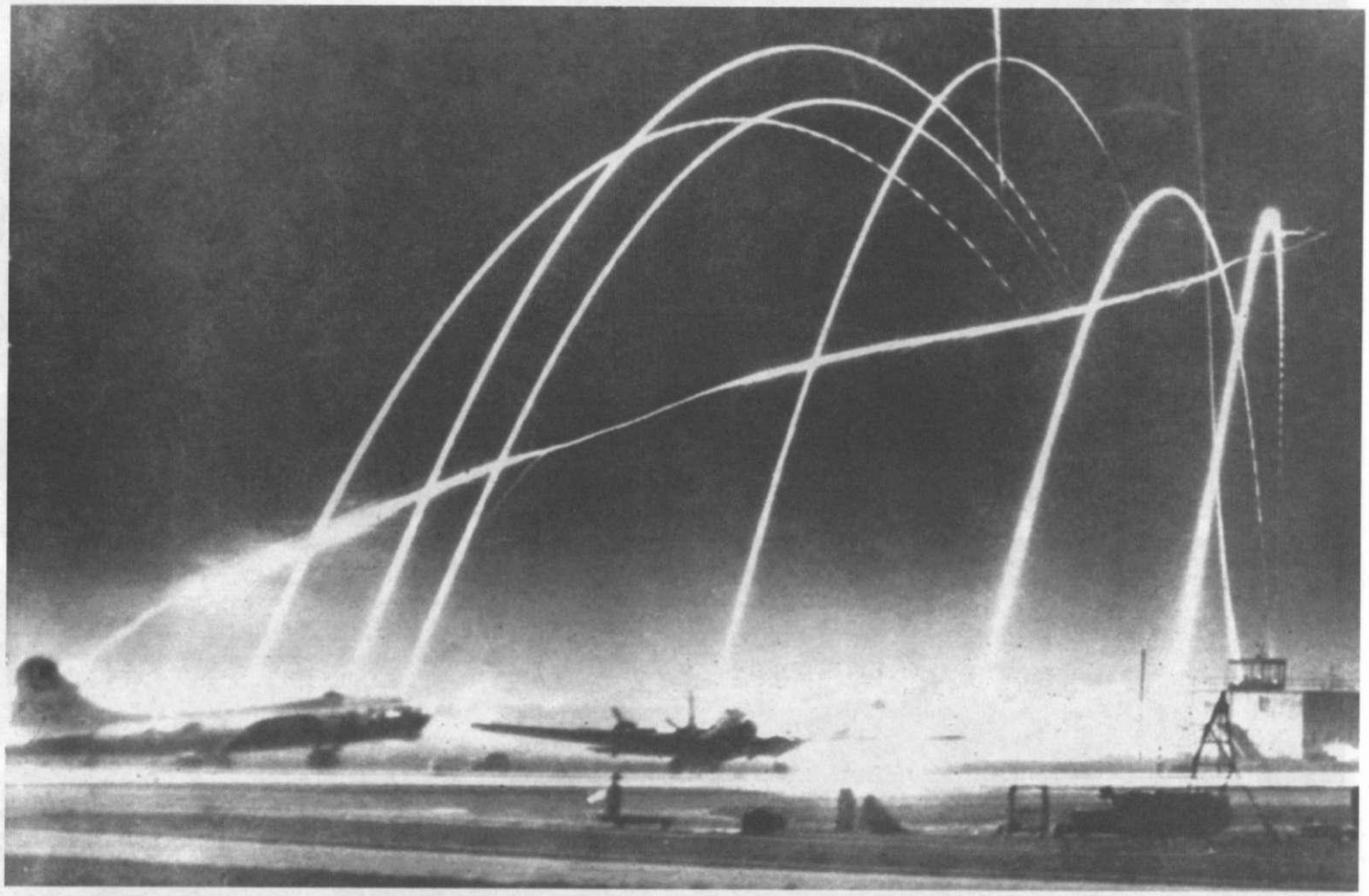
The struggle across the Owen Stanley Range will be for ever famous in Australian history—and in the history of the British Commonwealth of Nations. As at Alamein, the Australian troops accomplished the impossible. They had Nature against them as well as the enemy. Whether in the mountains or on the coast when they had surmounted the ridge, everything in the way of weather and other natural conditions hampered and attacked them. Do you recollect how day after day at one period, which now seems far back, we used to hear of Buna and Gona, beach strongholds which were hard to get past? No wonder they resisted a long time. The Japanese method of defending them was to build "a maze of earthworks and pill-boxes in the construction of which they used coconut palms. Trunks up to a foot in diameter formed cover for strongposts which were able to stand hits from even 25-pounders."

In these posts Japanese soldiers for weeks, ate, drank and slept in filthy pits only a few feet square. They obeyed the order to "stay there," and rarely showed any initiative or attempted to gain ground. "Reliefs, ammunition and stores were taken through a maze of communicating trenches four feet deep. They were living underground and fighting from almost impenetrable strongposts."

BUT the Aussies penetrated them one by one until they had cleared almost the whole island of the enemy. Their plan has been the same throughout and everywhere. "Attack, always attack." It was a dire necessity as well as a sure key to success. "It was completely beyond the capacity of a country with a population of only seven millions to defend even its most vulnerable areas, particularly as it had been committed to the maintenance of a substantial contribution to the Empire air programme and to the maintenance of its divisions abroad, while the small Australian Navy was largely on service in European waters."

There were twelve thousand miles of coast-line and almost the entire population was settled in the east, south and south-west regions. The part of the country where the invader would have made his landing was sparsely inhabited and distances were enormous. "It was because of this that Australian strategy contemplated meeting the Japanese wherever he would make the fight outside the Australian mainland."

That strategy was sound and has been brilliantly put into operation. When the Japanese are at last disposed of, the credit for at all events the earlier part of their discomfiture will certainly go to the Australian Army and Air Force.



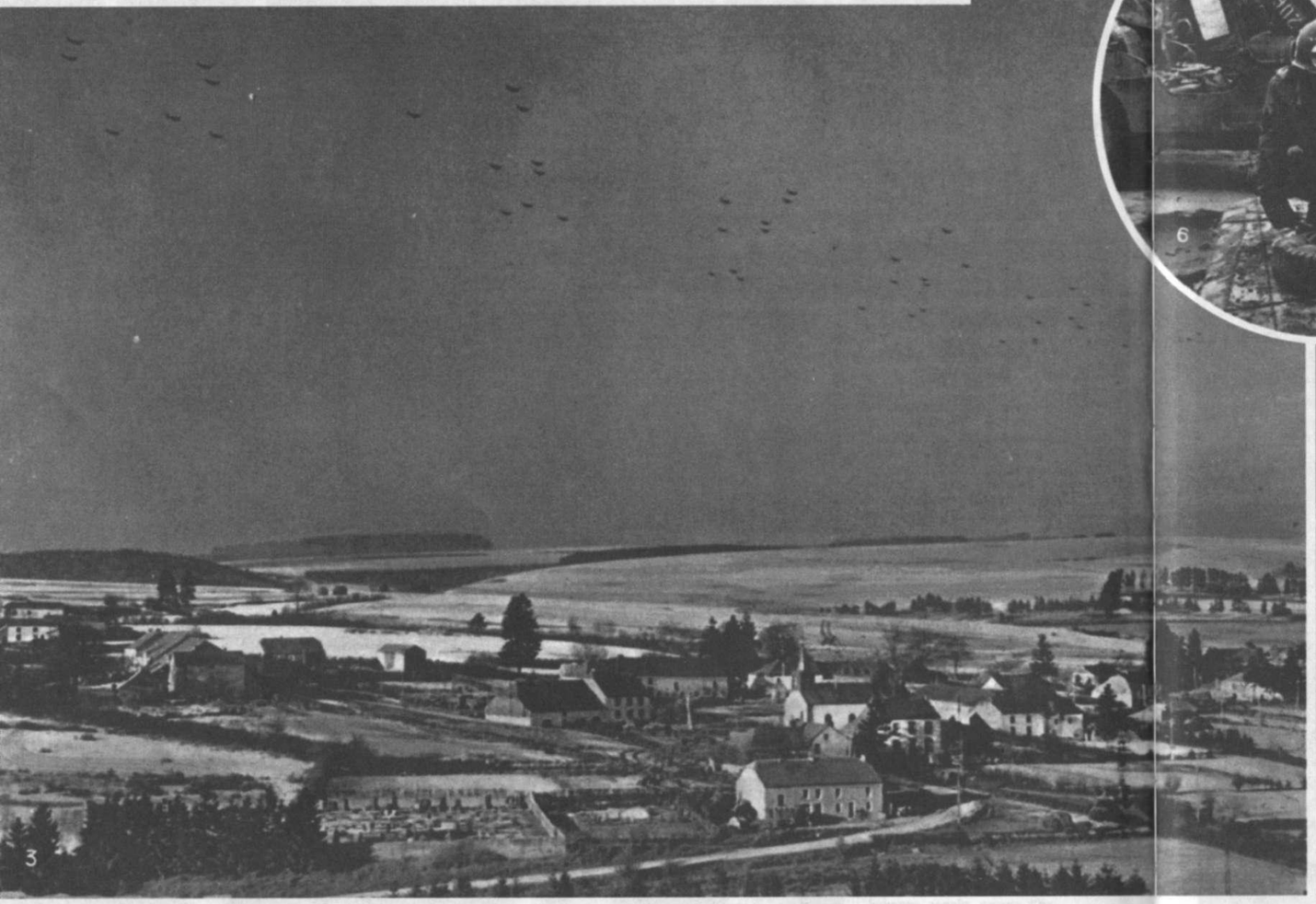
Battle Trails in Icy Skies

In support of Allied ground operations against Von Rundstedt, R.A.F. Bomber Command—despite widespread fog and bad weather—dropped nearly 10,000 tons during the first week of the breakthrough, from Dec. 17, 1944, and 14,000 tons from Dec. 24 to 31.

Homing from targets deep in Germany, a flight of Lancasters, unable to land on their own airfield, came down on this U.S.A. 8th Air Force heavy bomber base (above) guided by flares arching into the bitter sky and by ground-lights and welcome signals from the control tower. Fortresses are ready to take the air.

Our attacking fighters and bombers frequently return these winter days with airframes ice-encrusted, ground-crews chipping away the frozen burden as machines touch down. Silhouetted against the German sky (right) streaked with vapour trails from Allied and enemy planes engaged in a dog-fight on Christmas Day, this American A.A. battery waited to pick off an oncoming target.

Photos, P.N.A., U.S. Official



German Breakthrough in the Belgian Ardennes—

Field-Marshal Montgomery declared on Jan. 7, 1945, that Von Rundstedt's invading forces were " now being written off." U.S. tank-destroyers (1) covered the Bastogne area as American troops forged slowly into the German salient. Dashing tank commander of the U.S. 3rd Army, Lieut.-Col. Creighton Abrams, standing in the turret of his tank (2) gives orders through the " mike " during the drive into Bastogne, whose defenders were provided with food and munitions by air (3).

Photos, Planet News, Associated Press, Fox Photos

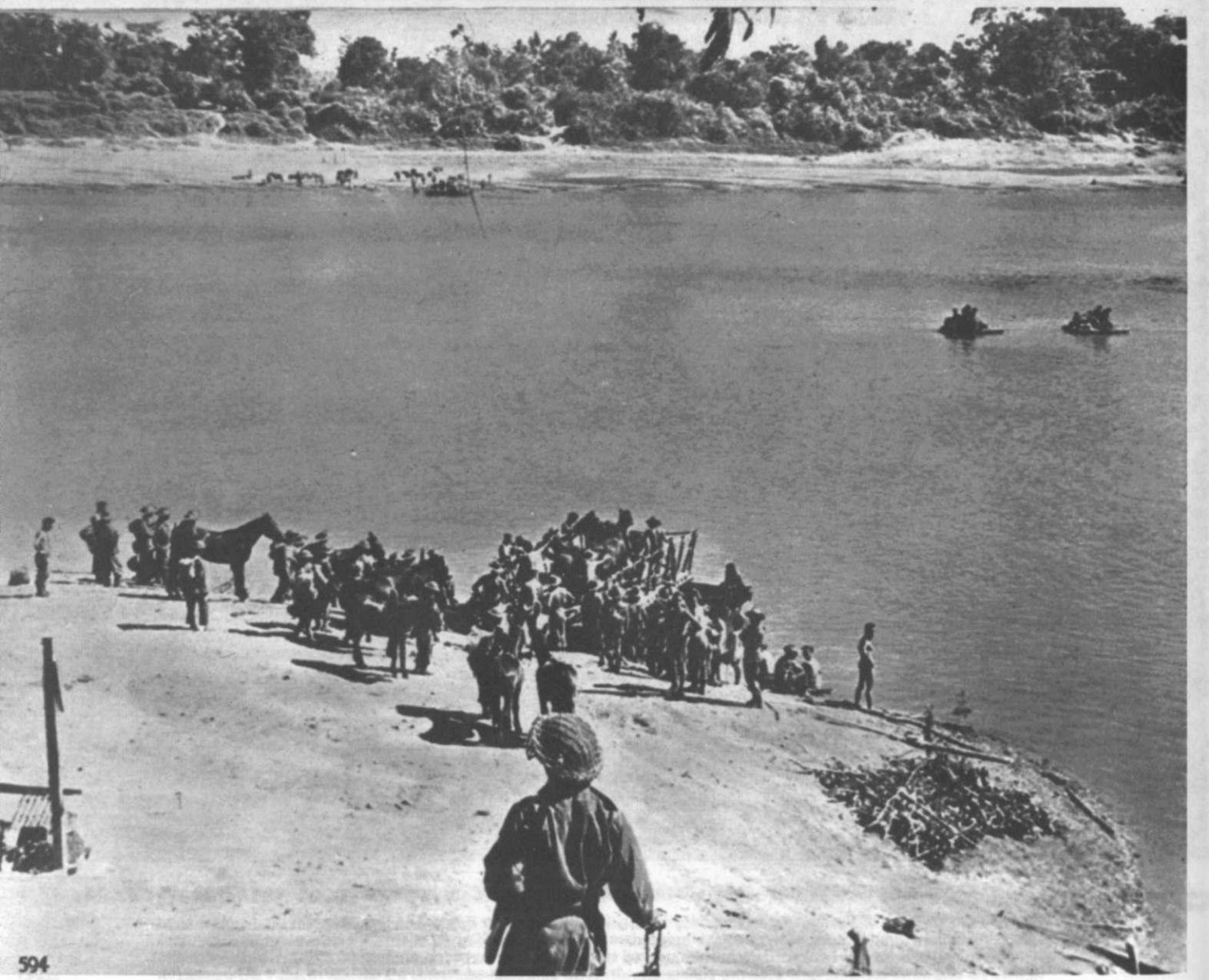
—Stemmed on South Flank by Gen. Patton's Men

Covering the lower arc of the ominous bulge driven into the American lines in Belgium on Dec. 16, 1944, the 4th Armoured Division of Gen. Patton's U.S. 3rd Army smashed through from the south and on Dec. 27 relieved the elements of three divisions trapped in Bastogne for eight days. Parachutes were used to supply them: containers are seen (4) still attached. Vehicles of the relieving division lined up in the town square (5). An American corporal repairs a puncture in a tire of his jeep (6).

Burma's Chindwin Crossed

Closing weeks of 1944 saw substantial advances by Allied troops on all sectors of the Burma front. An important link-up was effected by the crossing of the Upper Chindwin River, near Sittaung, on Nov. 17 by British and Indian troops of the 4th Corps. Pushing east, these joined forces with the 36th British Division during the week ending Dec. 15. Between those dates the 4th Corps captured vital townships on the Mandalay railway. Preparing for the crossing (left) that won the Chindwin bridge-head, with mules, horses and jeeps lined up on the bank. Troops of a Welsh regiment safely over (below).

Photos, British Official



I Helped the 14th Army in Burma to Laugh

Write to them as frequently as possible. Send them newspapers and magazines, razor blades and shaving soap and toothpaste. This urgent suggestion is offered to relatives and friends of the gallant 14th Army by that great-hearted comedian STAINLESS STEPHEN, who has been among the men and has written this light-hearted chronicle specially for "The War Illustrated."

ON March 2, 1944, under the light of a full moon, a bowler-hatted comedian, using two tank transporters as a stage, was giving a show to 5,000 assorted fighting men near a certain Milestone on the Imphal-Kohima road. Fifteen weeks later, to the very day, at that self-same spot, the 4th Corps, driving north from Imphal, met the 33rd Corps, working south from Kohima. The Japanese dream of a speedy conquest of India had been shattered—General "Bill" Slim's 14th Army had won a great victory. Something else had died during those four months besides 50,000 Japanese, namely, the idea that the foe was invincible in his own chosen terrain of the jungle.

What sort of men are these who so decisively smashed the enemy? It has been my privilege, as that bowler-hatted comedian, to do a hundred shows before a hundred thousand of the "Forgotten 14th." From Calcutta I flew direct to Imphal, using a basha as headquarters for several weeks. Here I met the B.O.R. (British Other Rank), which initials distinguish him from the I.O.R. (Indian Other Rank).

In the Jungle for Thirty Months

Exposure to sun and air has turned them the colour of teak, and they are as tough. It's an individual war out there; personal initiative counts more than anything. No overwhelming artillery barrage precedes the attack. The enemy must be winkled out of his bunkers by hand-to-hand fighting of the cloak-and-dagger variety. The Jap is a fanatical warrior whose ambition is to die for his Emperor; and with the co-operation of the 14th Army many thousands of them have realized that ambition. And rather than surrender, the "Nip" commits harikiri by blowing himself up with one of his own grenades.

"Smile Awhile," the first E.N.S.A. outfit to play to the 14th, gave a series of shows on the Imphal sector. We appeared, often, in the open; at other times in wigwams made of bamboo poles interlaced with rushes. Capacity was infinity; sometimes there were as many behind the stage as in front. As the shows were free, no seats were reserved. Armed with rifles, Bren guns and knives, the audience squatted on the mud floor of the basha. At a well-known spot near Palel we entertained a famous Highland regiment, the majority of whom had been in the jungle for thirty months. Little wonder they listened to us open-mouthed, for we recalled memories of a dim, pre-war existence.

IN the River Chindwin area, I left Imphal at daybreak and sped in the Corps General's car via Palel to Tamu. By the way, this road is one of the outstanding engineering achievements of all times. Whoever designed it must have been a snakes-and-ladders specialist. There were hairpin bends every hundred yards, and in fifty miles we climbed 4,000 feet. Dust was three feet deep most of the way; talk about "sand in your shoes," I had grit in my gizzard, and the continual swaying of the car round innumerable bends made me feel more dizzy than any blonde. However, we reached Tamu, eighty miles in five and a half hours.

The only building left there was a derelict Buddhist temple. Not a soul was to be seen, and I almost trod on the General's aide-de-camp, the fox-hole being used as Divisional Headquarters was so well camouflaged. After the inevitable mug of char, I was shown the stage—an ammunition box, and the rest was up to me. The audience had appeared as though by magic from the dense tropical undergrowth. You may have read in books about the silence of the jungle; it's a myth. Myriads of cigalas, a species of grasshopper, combine to make a shrill ear-piercing screech. Add to this the raucous squawks of gaily plumaged birds, and you have some idea of this eerie jungle atmosphere. Two more shows to some Chindits and anti-tank gunners, and I left by jeep for my deepest penetration into Burma.

THIRTY miles down the Sittaung road brought me to my fourth audience, a West-Country infantry regiment who were awaiting my arrival in Devon Wood, overlooking the banks of the Chindwin. Here hundreds of chattering monkeys swung in

SOUTH WALES BORDERER after nearly a week of constant patrol in Burma—typical of the grand men whom the inimitable Stainless Stephen has entertained "on the spot." **See also page 492.** *Photo, British Official*

the trees above us, one of the noisiest galleries I have experienced. Incidentally, during all these performances, sentry groups were posted round about in case we were disturbed by roving Japanese patrols. And that particular matinee audience had to withdraw many miles towards Tamu that same night to escape infiltration. I used to tell the troops that the initials E.N.S.A. meant "Every night something 'appens," and there it almost did. I was so near the Japs they could hear my teeth chattering.

And so back to the airstrip with me less Stainless than ever, in my coating of Burmese dust. Here, standing on the bonnet of a jeep, which was so burning hot I had to mark time all through my 40 minutes show, I staggered through my fifth performance to these fellows behind the back-of-beyond, just as the sun was setting. Remember, there is no twilight in Burma; darkness and stand-to were close at hand, and the jungle was no place for a solitary civilian. Overhead sounded a familiar drone, and silhouetted against the sun was a welcome sight—the Harvard that was to fly me back to Imphal.

Tired? Yes, I'd had it! No wonder, 150 miles massage by road, 70 miles by plane, five shows, not one of them less than forty minutes, and all in a temperature of over a hundred degrees. But it was worth it; my memories will never fade of those jungle warriors, second to none, in their lonely outposts of Empire. En passant, I had no trouble whatever with piano or microphone, for the reason that they didn't exist.

What did I say to these men? What did they laugh at? I usually began with a gentle leg-pull describing the delights of India in general and the Burma front in particular; how I'd have to change my name from Stainless to Spineless if I did any more jeeping. I told them I'd eaten so many soya links (sausages made from soya beans) that I'd had to report sick with square tonsils. Incidentally, many of these men have never tasted spam—bully-beef is their stand-by. Scotsmen were more than interested to hear that Scotch whisky was so scarce in Britain that when a "wee hauf" was poured on the haggis at the Burns' supper, the haggis stood up and sang "Mother Machree." Or so 'twas said!

Bend Down to Let the Moon Pass

Gags on the personalities of the unit were sure-fire. To wind up, I crooned an original ditty, "News from the Homeland," which included couplets about the principal cities and towns at home, a rapid comic survey of the British Isles. I promised the boys that I would contact their relatives at home whenever possible (so far I've met over 3,000), and concluded by inviting them to join me in a pint as soon as possible. Recently in Plymouth five gunners from Imphal turned up, which is the reason my wife's housekeeping allowance was cut somewhat.

My farewell performance on this part of the front was at Kohima, 7,000 feet up in the Chin Hills. At nights here it was almost necessary to bend down to let the moon pass! Half of our audiences were convalescents from the rest camp, who, with the Royal West Kents and the Assam Rifles, held out against vastly superior enemy forces for thirteen days in the fiercest hand-to-hand fighting on the whole front.

I next worked my way north via Dibrugarh as far as Ledo, about 200 miles from the borders of China. Here we had very cosmopolitan audiences, British, Americans, Indians, West Africans, Chinese and a platoon of sun-worshippers from Manchester! American military police, complete with tommy-guns, acted as ushers. I should like to mention that American audiences were always most appreciative.

AFTER flying back to Calcutta I took the air again, for the Arakan front, in south Burma. Here I did 22 shows in seven days. My total kit comprised a bowler-hat, shaving outfit, toothbrush and mosquito net. At Bawli Bazaar the audience numbered 4,000: the Corps Commander sat on the ground amongst his troops. This was a cine-variety show. A three-tonner vehicle was my stage, and I stood in the light of the projector of the portable cinema. And did the insects buzz round! The high spot of my appearances hereabouts was on one of the peaks of the Mayu mountains, to some Scottish troops. To reach them I had to motor up the "jeep-track" gradient of one in two. On Easter Sunday I did five shows, visited two casualty clearing stations, and attended two church services. On this part of the front I lived in fox-holes for five nights, with plenty of rifle fire at night to remind me that there was a war on!

George Medals for These Factory Heroes

ALMOST INCREDIBLE BRAVERY amid flames 2,000 feet high, bursting bombs and red-hot metal, in an explosion at the Royal Ordnance Factory, Hereford, on the night of May 30, 1944, was reported in The London Gazette of January 9, 1945, which announced the award of two O.B.E.s, five George Medals, and nine British Empire Medals to gallant members of the staff; fifteen others were Commended for brave conduct. The fire started inside a large filled bomb and spread to other bombs, mines, and a container of explosive. The bomb split and exploded, sending up a sheet of flame 2,000 feet high. White hot girders and concrete blocks were flung over a wide area. Other explosions followed, and the filling house was completely demolished.

"The spirit of the factory was magnificent," stated the Gazette. "The staff and workers who were off duty hurried to help. Women ambulance drivers and stretcher-bearers ignored the risks of blast, debris, and further explosions. The men of the Factory Fire Brigade faced the risk of death and fought heroically to give the mass of workers time to get to the shelters."

REALIZING that the danger was focussed in an area within which a thousand tons of powerful explosives were housed, and that any spot therein upon which burning debris fell would be a source of extreme peril, the factory Superintendent, Mr. R. E. D. Ovens (awarded the O.B.E.) at once set up his headquarters in the open, and conducted operations throughout the night. His "courage, coolness and resource, his complete disregard of his own safety in his concern for the lives of the workers and his selfless devotion to duty," stated the official account, "were beyond praise." Meanwhile, inside the blazing building astonishing feats were being performed by members of the staff.

THE Director-General of Filling Factories, Mr. C. S. Robinson, in presenting the ribbons of the awards in the factory canteen on January 9, revealed that some of the men, including Fireman Davies, Mr. F. J. Tyler and Mr. J. W. Little (whose heroic deeds are described in greater detail below) poured sand or water into the open mouth of the blazing bomb for 20 minutes, knowing that at any moment they might be blown to pieces.

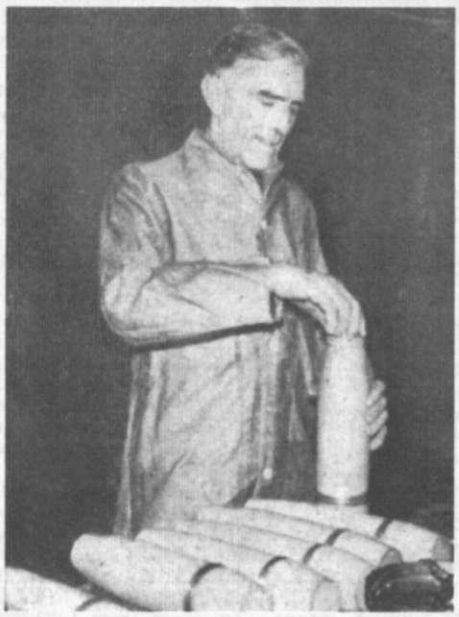
It was also disclosed that thirty-one 2,000-lb. bombs, or their equivalent in mines, exploded. Yet, despite this and thanks to the incomparable heroism of the firemen and the workers, only two people were killed. Between 700 and 800 operatives were evacuated from the factory to safety during the holocaust.

F. A. LEWIS

Assistant Fire Brigade Officer at the factory, whose "energy, grit and determination seemed inexhaustible. Under his leadership his men returned again and again to face almost incredible risks." When the building collapsed about him he got out, assisting other injured firemen and leading them into an explosive store which was on fire; ordering his men to spray him, he forced open the red-hot steel doors, which had become jammed, and got the fire under control. After the explosion, in which he was flung 30 yards out of the building, he fought one fire after another, inspiring his men.

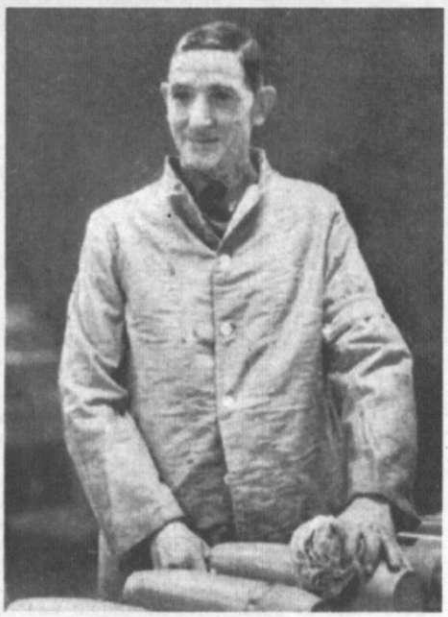
H. E. DAVIES

This fireman (right) tried to deflect with his hands fire-blanketing "foam" into the bomb where the blaze had originated. When no more foam was available he seized a hose and played water on the bomb casing until this was red-hot and the contents were shooting out. He then rushed for the emergency doors, stopped, and returned, intending to get the hose right into the bomb. Before he could do so it exploded, and he was blown out of the building and covered with debris. Rescued by F. J. Tyler (below), he was being taken to an ambulance when another explosion occurred. He at once returned to the scene, to rescue another fireman trapped in the wreckage. In spite of yet another explosion he saved his comrade.



FREDERICK J. TYLER

A process-worker, this fire-fighter was directing a hose on the blazing bomb when it exploded. He was blown through the emergency door and pinned under debris. Recovering consciousness, and despite severe injuries, he dragged hot debris, metal girders, and a part of the collapsed roof off Fireman Davies (above), saving his life. Tyler himself was then taken away in an ambulance.



JAMES WINTER LITTLE

This Senior Overlooker was assisting in efforts to extinguish the contents of the red-hot bomb when it exploded. He was tossed into the air, over the bomb rack, hit a girder and was flung against the wall before dropping to earth. He was severely injured. Said the citation, "He displayed outstanding courage, tenacity and devotion to duty."

ST. VINCENT DE LISLE CAREY

He led a party of stretcher-bearers straight to the inferno as flames and white-hot explosives were shooting through the roof. A number of bombs exploded, the building collapsed, men were blown in every direction. Though badly injured he had set to work rescuing them when another explosion blew him out of the corridor. He displayed "courage and cool judgement in the highest degree."

Photos, British Official

Where Kesselring's Fierce Attack Was Held

Lieut.-Gen. L. K. TRUSCOTT, Jr., who succeeded Gen. Mark Clark as Commander of the 5th Army on the latter's promotion to C.-in-C. Allied Forces in Italy, announced on Nov. 26, 1944.

IN THE SAN CLERMONTE SECTOR in Italy, this 5th Army gunner (1) built his own winter quarters from stones, sandbags and tarpaulins. Snow-canopied transport line a roadside in the Serchio Valley (2) where the 5th Army held Kesselring's strong counter-blows in late December 1944. Of stout assistance in the campaign were snow-clearing men of the African Pioneer Corps (3). Mortar platoon (4) with the 8th Army advancing north of Faenza. *Photos, British Official; Associated Press. Map by courtesy of The Times*

The Story of the Little Bronze Cross for Valour—

The most famous decoration in the world—the highest of its kind—the Victoria Cross is but an ounce of bronze. But the award itself is without price. This story of its record up to the present day—told by J. M. MICHAELSON—is of particular interest in connexion with the series of portraits of V.C.s which have appeared in "The War Illustrated" since its commencement

ANOTHER stirring chapter in the history of the Victoria Cross was written recently, when a D.C.M. awarded for a very courageous act in battle was later replaced by the higher award of a V.C. (C.S.M. Peter Wright—see illus. p. 478). It is believed that this was at least partly on the suggestion of H.M. the King, who had personally decorated the soldier concerned.

All honours come from the King, but the V.C. is peculiarly a royal honour. The idea of a new cross as a decoration for the highest courage in the face of the enemy was Queen Victoria's, and each sovereign subsequently has contributed something to the V.C. and the manner in which it is awarded. Apart from the original idea, Queen Victoria personally suggested the nobly simple words "For Valour" on the cross. The first suggestion was that the wording should be "For the Brave." Queen Victoria objected that this might lead to the inference that only those who received the Cross were brave. After some thought she suggested "For Valour," and no one had any doubt it was a happy inspiration.

King Edward VII secured a change in the warrant governing the conditions, by which the V.C. could be awarded posthumously. Previously, the rule had been that if a man died during the performance of an act that might entitle him to a V.C., or at any time before the Cross was presented, the Cross was withheld although the record remained. Many V.C.s since have been awarded posthumously, the presentation as a rule being made to the next-of-kin.

KING GEORGE V, who presented 633 V.C.s for supreme acts of courage in the war of 1914-1918, changed the warrant so that it was not restricted to men in the fighting services but could be given to anyone performing an act of great courage "in the face of the enemy," with the proviso that the individual was acting under someone in the regular services. This made women and even civilians eligible in certain circumstances. The actual words of the supplementary warrant speak of "every grade and rank of all grades of all branches of H.M. Forces, British and Colonial." Eligibility, originally confined to men in the home forces, had already been extended to Indian soldiers by a change in the rules in 1911. In the present war, at the time of writing, there have been 17 V.C.s awarded to members of the Indian Army, 22 to members of the Dominion Forces and one to a member of a Colonial Force—that of Fiji.

It is not easy to visualize conditions in which a civilian could receive the Cross, and it was for this reason that the King instituted the George Cross in 1940, for gallantry in air raids in this country and not in face of the enemy as with the V.C. In spite of the great number of women in the military nursing services, the W.R.N.S., the A.T.S. and the W.A.A.F., conditions under which a heroic act might be performed within the scope of the V.C. do not often occur and no award has so far been made to a woman.

The V.C. was officially announced on January 29, 1856, and the first awards were made in the following year when a considerable number of the Crosses were presented simultaneously. Altogether in the "minor wars" of the 19th century and the Boer War, 525 V.C.s were presented; and the fact that only some 120 have been awarded in the present war reflects the very high standard of courage required and, perhaps, the changing conditions of war in which individual heroism counts less than "team work."

Crosses Made from Crimean Cannon

The first V.C.s were struck from the metal of Russian cannon captured at Sebastopol during the Crimean war and the custom remained until early in the present war, the supply of this metal ran out. It is now supplied by private contract. Unlike all other medals, the V.C. is not struck at the Mint, but made by a private firm of London jewellers. They made the first V.C. and have continued to make the Crosses ever since. In a special ledger is recorded the name of every man for whom a Cross has been made, the number now totalling well over 1,200. The first entry is Charles David Lucas, a midshipman who in 1854 handled a burning shell to save his ship and comrades.

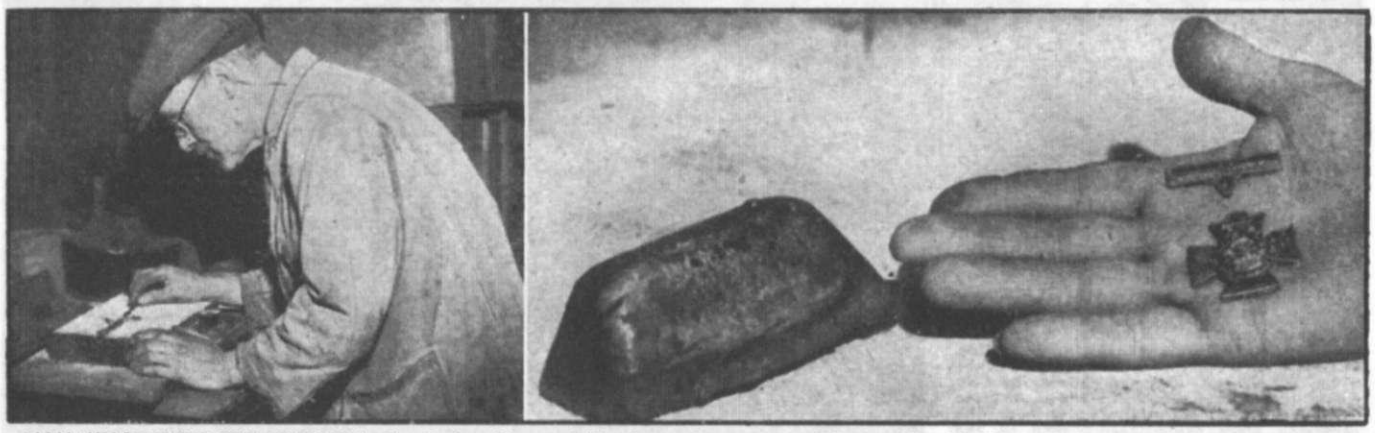
VALUE of the metal is about threepence, and the weight is one ounce. The award itself is, of course, without price. It is recognized not only in Britain but all over the world as the hardest honour to win. It has never been made "cheap" by numerous awards and is harder to win now, perhaps, than ever it was. Courage is always hard to grade, and the special committee who have the task of deciding finally about recommendations, even when they have ensured that only recommendations complying with the warrant are considered, can have no easy task. It must not be forgotten, also, that many acts of great courage in modern warfare are performed when there are no witnesses who survive. The exact words of the warrant are "some signal act of valour or devotion to the Country" performed in the face of the enemy. "Signal" means, presumably, outstanding, and it is therefore not enough to perform an act of great heroism. It must be outstanding. For a short period during the last century the warrant was amended so that acts of gallantry not in the face of the enemy could be rewarded; one such award was made—to a soldier after a Fenian raid in Canada.

ORIGINALLY the ribbon of the V.C. was dark red if the wearer was in the Army, blue if he was in the Navy. The institution of the R.A.F. would have called for a third colour. Instead, a single colour for all the Forces was decided upon. Today, the V.C. ribbon is always dark red. When the ribbon is worn without the medal, a miniature V.C. is in the centre. If a bar to the V.C. has been awarded, a second miniature Cross is added to the ribbon. A bar to the V.C. has been awarded only twice in the history of the decoration: to Captain Chevasse (second award was posthumous), and Lieut.-Col. A. Martin-Leake, both of the R.A.M.C.

Crosses are not made individually for each recipient. A very small number are kept in stock and sent as required to the Service Ministries. The V.C., is, of course, the most treasured of decorations, but occasionally one has come into the saleroom. The prices paid have varied from £50 to £170. A Cross is not permitted to be sold until after the death of the recipient. Every winner of the Victoria Cross not an officer receives automatically ten pounds a year, and a bar to the decoration brings another five pounds a year. Where there is need, up to £50 a year can be given by the terms of the warrant.

FOR those who have never seen a V.C., technical details will be of interest. Name, rank and unit of the recipient are engraved on the reverse of the clasp. The date of the act which won the Cross is on the reverse of the Cross itself. The clasp is decorated with a "laureated spray," and when there is a bar to the V.C. it is of similar design to the clasp fixed half-way up the riband. The V.C. is worn before all decorations or insignia of any kind.

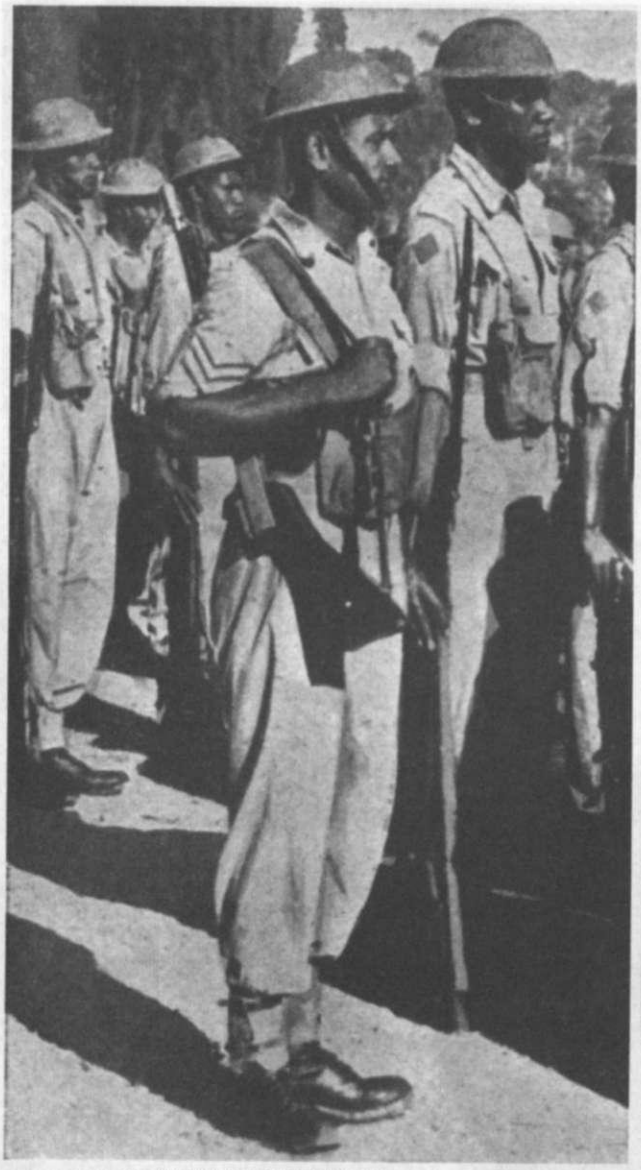
There have been a number of pleas in the Press for more V.C.s to be awarded. During the first years of this war, the number of V.C.s averaged only one a month, compared with twelve a month in the war of 1914-18. The number of Crosses awarded has increased recently, and a short time ago five awards were announced on a single day.



MAN WHO MAKES THE CROSSES is Alec Forbes, 60-year-old London craftsman, seen (left) moulding his 751st. He has cast all the crosses for the past 40 years. Fifty can be moulded from this one bronze ingot (right). The metal originally used was from cannon captured during the Crimean war; now the bronze is supplied by private contract. This highest possible award for heroism was instituted in 1856, and first awards were made a year later. Since 1920 it has been extended to include nurses and civilians.

Photos, G.P.U.

—And Seven Brave Men Who Have Lately Won It



Cpl. SEFANAIA SUKANAIVALU
The first Fijian V.C. of the war, this N.C.O. of the Fiji Infantry Regiment fell badly wounded while rescuing casualties under fire in the Solomon Islands, in June 1944. To dissuade his comrades from endangering their lives by attempting to rescue him, he raised himself before the enemy—and was riddled with bullets.

Cpl. SIDNEY BATES
When troops of the Royal Norfolk Regiment were sorely pressed in Normandy in August 1944, Corporal Bates, armed with a Bren gun, charged the enemy single-handed, firing from the hip until mortally wounded.

Wing-Cmdr. G. L. CHESHIRE, D.S.O. (2 bars), D.F.C.
Described as "probably the greatest bomber pilot of any Air Force in the world," Wing-Commander Cheshire accomplished daring low-flying exploits. Awarded the V.C. on Sept. 9, 1944.

Naik YESHWANT GHADGE
This N.C.O. of the 5th Mahratta Light Infantry captured an enemy machine-gun post single-handed, in Italy in July 1944, killing its crew before himself being killed by snipers. His was the first Mahratta V.C.

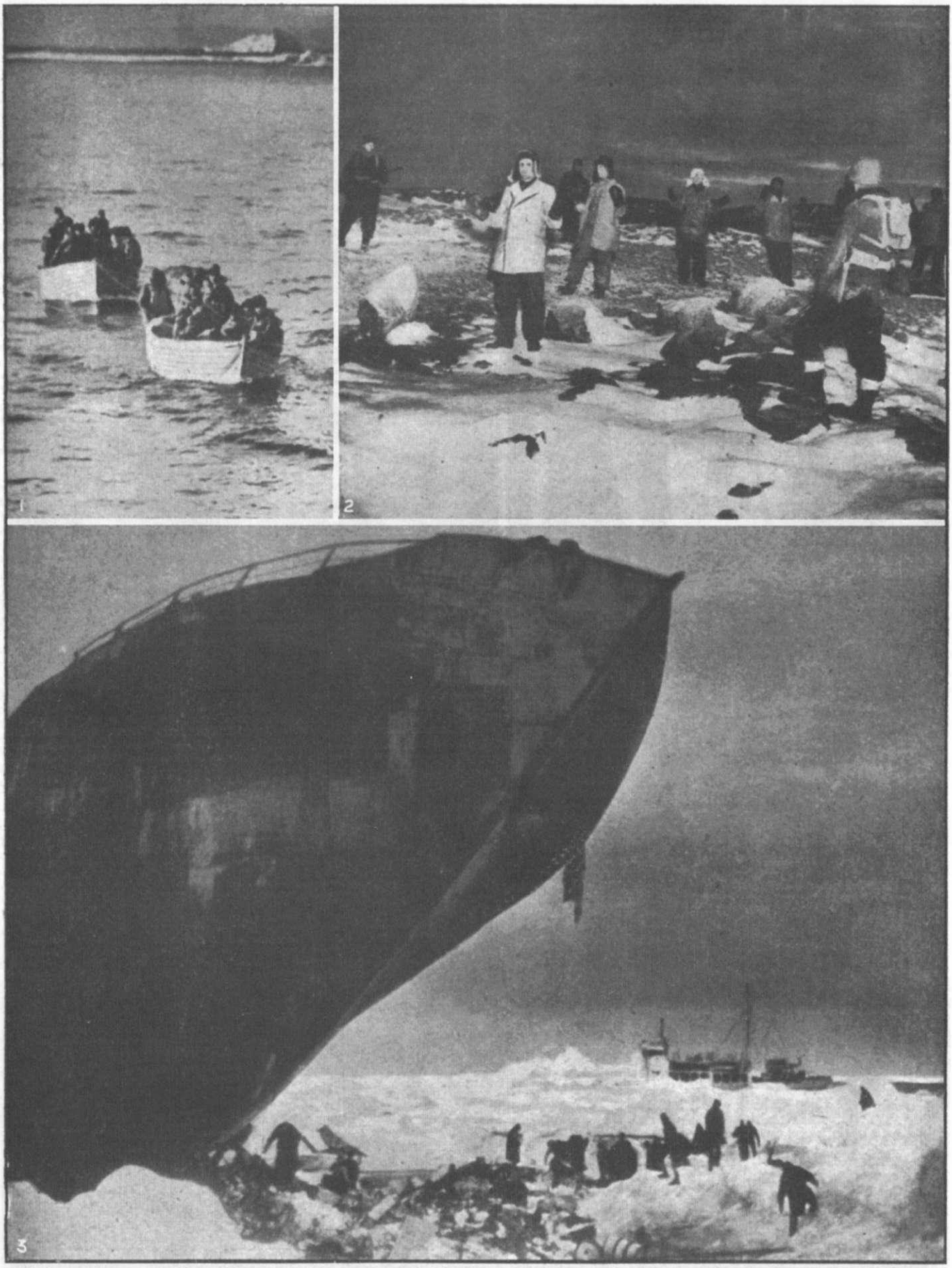
Captain MICHAEL ALLMAND
Hero of two magnificent exploits in Burma, in June 1944, in which, though in great pain, he inspired his men to capture two important bridges, this officer of the 6th Gurkha Rifles later died from wounds.

Coy. Havildar-Major CHHELU RAM
Though mortally wounded in Tunisia in April 1943, this N.C.O. of the 6th Rajputana Rifles rallied his company to hold a vital outpost with only bayonets and stones. This is the only known portrait of Chhelu Ram.

Major DAVID VIVIAN CURRIE
Of the Canadian Armoured Corps, Major D. V. Currie (right) is seen being congratulated on his V.C. award, by the Commander of the 1st Canadian Army. In three days and nights of fierce fighting in August 1944, near Falaise, Major Currie and his small force cost the Germans seven tanks, 12 88-mm. guns, 40 vehicles, 300 dead, 500 wounded and 2,100 prisoners.

Photos, British, Indian and Canadian Official, Daily Mirror, Planet News

Nazis Failed to Establish Greenland Radio Base



THREE DETERMINED ATTEMPTS by the Germans, between July and October 1944, to establish radio and meteorological bases on Greenland were foiled by U.S. Coast Guards, the enemy losing three armed trawlers, their equipment and over 60 officers and men. After scuttling their ship, the Nazis approached the U.S. combat cutter which had trapped their trawler in the ice (1); while others (2) surrendered their gear. The cutter Northland (3, in background) hemmed in the ice this German trawler after a 70-mile chase.

Photos, Planet News, Associated Press

I WAS THERE! Eye Witness Stories of the War

British Fought Like Tigers at the Ardennes Tip

Operating under Field-Marshal Montgomery's new command, troops—mostly of the British 6th Airborne Division—in early January 1945 battled magnificently for the fortress-village of Bure, at the extreme tip of the northern section of Von Rundstedt's salient in Belgium, which Hitler's crack 2nd Panzer Grenadiers fought like madmen to hold. The action is described by Richard McMillan, B.U.P. war correspondent.

I WATCHED them go into action in a wilderness of snow and ice resembling the Russian front at its worst. The Germans hung on at the cost of great bloodshed until they were forced back yard by yard by the superior fighting power and superhuman valour of the British. For a whole day and a whole night the British hurled themselves in waves against the fiercely defended fortress into which Bure had been converted.

The fighting was grim, but it was hardly grimmer than the weather. The whole battlefield was like a cake of ice, with snow several inches deep and a frost which turned the normally gentle landscape of the Ardennes into a scene of iron. Against this background, fierce for human beings but fairy-like as the snowclad trees and frosted hedges sparkled in the light of the gun flashes, the town of Bure stained the white night with a thunderous flame. The British attacked just before dawn, and were thrown back. They went in again, held a few houses, attacked again, and got to the other end of the village.

Tribute to 'Those British Boys!'

There they were cut off. Then their comrades smashed through the snow and ice and the hail of death from the German self-propelled guns, tanks and spandaus to start the battle all over again. So it went on throughout the day. At one time it looked as if those deadly self-propelled guns, shoe-horned into the ruins of the once-pleasant wooded village, would win the day. We took a heavy toll of the enemy, but our dead lay there, too, many of them, sprawled across the roads or huddled gruesomely in ditches. Our tanks, too, had gone to ground. Flames from their idle hulks added to the fury of the inferno which blotched the silvery hills and valleys of a Christmas-card scene. Fresh troops are now forging forward to consolidate the ground gained and drive the enemy back towards Grupont.

Two platoons which had been cut off at the eastern end of the village were relieved, but they, too, had casualties. The Germans had turned tanks at the closest range against the houses in which they sheltered. Their gallant resistance alone is described as an epic. But they knew the quality of their comrades, and knew that they were never forsaken. It was the spirit of Arnhem all over again, only this time with the certainty of victory for us. A U.S. officer who came up from the scene of that bloody shambles exclaimed: "You couldn't believe it unless you had seen it, that human beings could fight like these British boys. They are tigers!"

As I went up towards the line the crags of the Ardennes peaks showed as patches of grim grey through the white. Then we came on scenes of war. German tanks and tracked troop carriers were smouldering, making black smudges in the quiet glades. Next we came on a team of London gunners, struggling and slipping uphill with their huge lorries dragging medium guns to the tops of the peaks to add to the bedlam which reached our ears more clearly every minute from the other side of the hills. "I think we'd manage better with skis or sledges!" remarked a man from Balham. Theirs looked like an impossible task—this struggle to haul those steel monsters from the valleys up these icy passes. But they won through.

Then I met a group of three solitary British soldiers. They came down from the snows where they had been on patrol, seeking out any stray German skulking in the higher woodlands. They too could crack a joke in the glacial grip of this Arctic battle scene. One of them, Corporal George Oakes, told me, "I come from Old Trafford, Manchester. I'd sooner be having a game there than playing these winter sports!" "As for me," grinned Lance-Corporal Harold Leader, from Street, Somerset, "I just wish I could get some real Somerset cider!" And a lad from Birmingham said, "We've seen Monty on the job. He looked in grand fettle as he tramped through the snow, chatting as usual with the men." That was the spirit I found everywhere among the troops—not only in the British but also in the American sector—tremendous élan because of the knowledge that Field-Marshal Montgomery had taken over.

Frozen and Terrified Prisoners

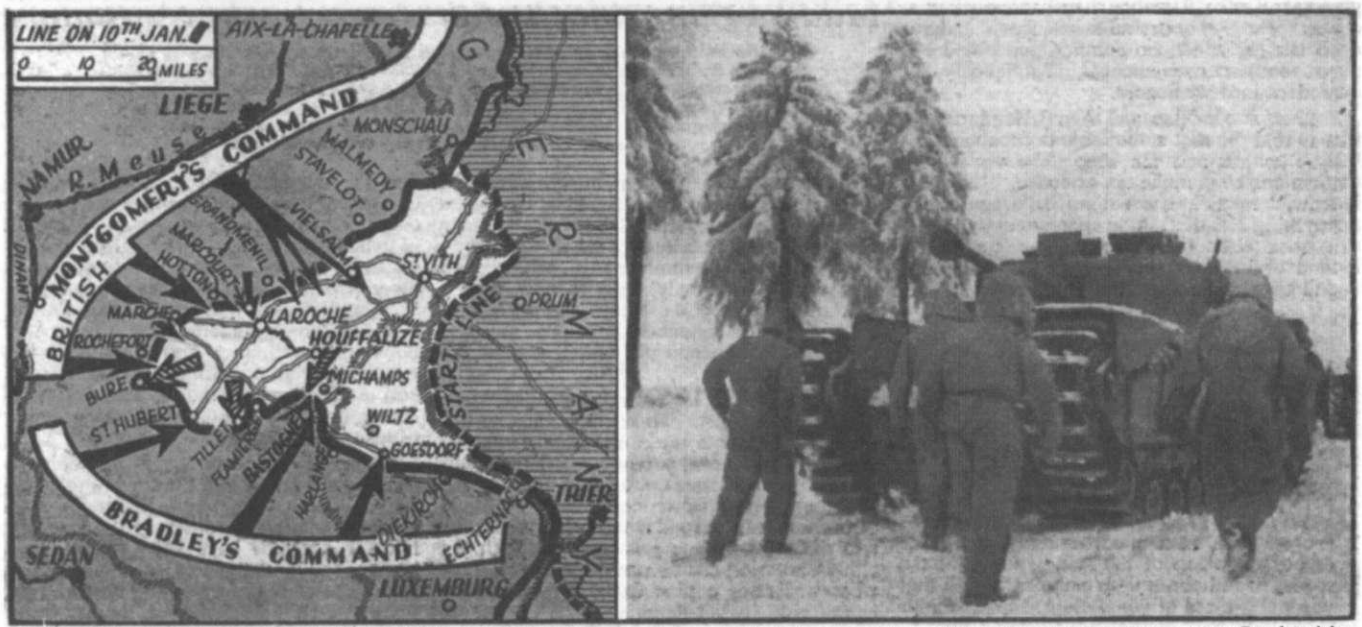
Americans with whom I talked all told me, "We know how highly you British rate Monty, but we know his value, too. He led you to victory in the desert, but don't forget he led both us Americans and the British in Normandy. Of course we're bucked, and already he is producing the goods." And so I went on over the pass and down to the battlefield. A group of German prisoners came past, shivering and looking hungry and terrified. The guards told me they had found them wandering in the snow. "It was too much for them," they said. "They'd had a night out and were freezing to death, so they came in with their hands up." But that did not mean those still in the line were not tough. "They are fighting more savagely than ever!" a British major told me. From the snow and dirt-blackened shell of the still smouldering village, sparks and eddies of smoke drifted up towards a sky of Alpine blue.

In the Front-Line Foxholes North of Bastogne

The way Allied troops were living and fighting and dying in snowbound foxholes on the southern flank of the German bulge into Belgium makes this Western Front battle a grim narrative indeed. Vividly the "atmosphere" is translated into words by Walter Farr, war correspondent of the Daily Mail, in this dispatch dated January 8, 1945. See also illus. pages 592-593.

I THINK I've found the war's worst job. It is worse than dodging flying bombs, worse than being fired on by rockets, worse than making a landing on a hostile beach, worse than fighting in submarines or bombing a well-defended target in a plane or attacking Japs in the jungle.

The war's worst job is fighting this winter battle in a frozen front-line foxhole out among the snow-covered hills north of



FIELD-MARSHAL MONTGOMERY'S EMERGENCY COMMAND is shown (left) facing General Bradley's 12th Army Group across Rundstedt's narrowing Ardennes salient on January 10, 1945. British troops, as narrated above, fought with magnificent gallantry at Bure, which was finally freed by the same date. Hooded crews mounted their Churchills (right) for a successful thrust in the Marche area: the attack began on January 4 from the line Marche-Hotton, in support of the U.S. 1st Army assault from Hotton.

Photo, British Official. Map, Evening News

NEAR BASTOGNE, IN THE ARDENNES SALIENT, these men of an armoured division were moving up on the U.S. 3rd Army front to dig for themselves foxholes in the snow-covered ground. Writing from the front on January 10, 1945, war correspondent Alan Moorehead declared that had Americans lost Bastogne " there was a reasonable chance of the Germans sweeping through to the coast and taking Antwerp, which would have meant the encirclement of the British armies." See also illus. pages 592-593. *Photo, U.S. Official*

Bastogne. When you try to size up what this Western Front fighting is all about I advise you to consider the way our men out here in the foxholes are living and fighting in their first real winter war.

I came up to snowbound "Foxhole Row" today to get its story. For whether Rundstedt keeps on coming or is smashed depends very little on the high strategic talk back in the rear areas and very much indeed on "Foxhole Row."

"Foxhole Row," of course, runs—apart from a few gaps—for five or six hundred miles from the North Sea to the Mediterranean. At the moment this part in front of Bastogne is the worst of it and the job here is about the toughest. To get to "Foxhole Row," Bastogne, you park your jeep two or three miles behind it and walk down a road swept by the enemy guns. You take a narrow, slippery path between the wrecks of Jerry tanks, step over a dog that got its head blown off, turn left past a shell-shattered wayside crucifix, and cross the brow of a hill.

"Foxhole Row," Bastogne, is the extreme tip of the Patton pincer and a very sharp tip it is, too. The occupants took up residence 19 days ago, and for 19 days and, most unpleasant of all, 19 nights they have stuck it out. These "undesirable residences" have no heating at all, no running water laid on, no modern conveniences, but plenty of modern inconveniences.

Back at Division and Army Headquarters they told me that some foxhole occupants get little heaters and can keep quite warm with them and even make tea or coffee. "Foxhole Row," in fact, has got no little heaters or anything like that. You keep warm by taking a brisk walk out on patrol in no man's land or by half-burying yourself in the straw and twigs in the bottom of your foxhole.

Science of Foxhole 'Comfort'

Each hole is approximately 6 ft. long, 3 ft. wide, and 3 ft. deep. It takes just over an hour to dig, though men have been known to dig holes in 20 minutes or even less when under fire. Having dug deep enough you put in a three- or four-inch layer of small twigs. Then, if you can get it, you put in a four- or five-inch layer of clean straw over the twigs.

You drive in a wooden stake, cut from the nearest bush, at each corner and rest a piece of board on top of the stakes, filling in the spaces round about with earth. Over all that you put a piece of white cloth, to make your foxhole look part of the snow-covered hill.

The temperature has been around zero for weeks, and standing guard is hard going. You stare out across the snow. By day, after you've stared at the great, white, unbroken landscape for hours, you begin to see "Germans" all over the place. A flurry of snow blown up on the crest of a hill by the wind looks like a German raiding party. You can look at a snow-covered bush or a shrub 400 yards away and slowly convince yourself it is a crouching German. The wind, the whiteness, and the cold strain your eyes.

Often it is difficult to move about enough to keep warm or keep awake, yet you cannot relax, for a swarm of German tanks and infantry can, and occasionally does, take you completely by surprise. "Foxhole Row" thinks the winter nights much worse than the days. Out on patrol, every crunch your feet make in the snow sounds so loud you are sure the waiting enemy can't fail to hear you. And when you are listening for enemy patrols every noise sounds like a footstep.

The Germans have devised some little tricks intended to annoy our men in "Foxhole Row." Sometimes, in the middle of the blackest night, a huge German police dog comes bounding at you. The Germans facing us have a lot of such well-trained dogs.

Astonishingly enough, not a man up here in "Foxhole Row" has a cold or cough, thanks, I believe, to their tremendous stamina and the fact that, as good soldiers, they have quickly learnt how to look after themselves.

Most of the people in "Foxhole Row" haven't had such a thing as a whisky, a cognac, a drop of gin, or even of beer, since they came here. Five of them went down the hill to a house in the valley this morning because they thought they saw a face flash past one of its broken windows. They surprised 20 Germans, brought them back, and eagerly seized two pleasant-looking bottles they were carrying.

The bottles had no labels, but they gave promise of whisky. "Foxhole Row" was excited—but they turned out to be full of vinegar! "Foxhole Row's" opinion of the fighting ability of the Germans—and it is worth noting carefully—is that they don't fight as well as they used to, but that they can still put up a remarkably good show. The bitter cold here not only freezes the soldiers' feet. Unless they're careful it freezes the oil in their guns. It even freezes the water in their water bottles.

Mud-Slogging with the 5th Army in the Apennines

No swift, spectacular advances are being made in the British part of the 5th Army sector in Italy. It would be miraculous if things were otherwise, for weather and ground conditions are almost incredibly bad. In this story, dated December 30, 1944, a Military Observer writes of seas of mud, rocky gorges and appalling hills, cantankerous mules, and ordeals of the wounded on their way to the dressing-stations.

BRITISH troops for three months now have been pushing forward, hill by hill (some of them higher than Snowdon), under filthy weather conditions, through the barren fastness of this Apennine range. The prize of the rich Lombardy plain is now within sight, tantalizingly close, but there are still more hills and a tenacious enemy to overcome before our men plant their feet finally on flat ground.

The other day I went forward almost as far as one can get. To reach there one has to climb through a range of mountains some 3,000 feet high, over a narrow, twisting road spread with a coffee-coloured soufflé of treacherous mud which conceals a multitude of potholes. This road is the supply route for two divisions. One grinds up through the clouds, wearing chains on one's wheels, past what was once a pine forest. Woodcutters have finished what American artillery began, and now all that is left of the tall trees is an expanse of splintered stumps, not unlike the masts of a vast, derelict shipyard. One then loops down into a valley, passes through a long, rocky gorge down the sides of which waterfalls tumble, like skeins of white wool, and climbs again up a road even more atrocious, until one can go no farther—because the enemy are just down the road. The Germans, unfortunately, are not only down the road, they are in the hills themselves between this road and the next one, and as there are only a few roads through the Apennines there are devilishly long stretches of hills in between each.

From where one turns off the main road one can get up in a jeep for about a mile, along a track of pine logs, laid by the engineers, like a venetian blind unrolled up the side of the hill. These hills have been turned, by the passage of guns, mules, and human feet into a brown sea of mud, and here and there, floating on the mud, is a little encampment of bivouacs dug into the side of the hill and strengthened with sandbags, for the enemy throws over an odd shell. A few unkempt

AT A MULE BASE IN THE APENNINES men of the 5th Army load their wiry beasts with supplies for forward troops. Some 3,000 feet above sea-level, the use of vehicles of any kind on the steep mountain tracks is impracticable—as explained in this and the facing page. *Photo, British Official*

little houses, straw stuffed into holes made by shellfire, give a little better protection from the almost incessant rain, but they are mostly taken by headquarters, and those who live there, braving a legion of rats, can count themselves lucky indeed.

Where the track ends one stands on the shore of this sea of mud; if one wants to go forward now one does so on foot. This spot, known as the Mule Base, is the meeting place for a million mules, tough, scruffy little animals that will not march for more than a couple of miles with a full load without demanding a rest, and if someone should dare to put one box of ammunition too many on their shoulders they contrive to throw it off in the first hundred yards. They eat vast quantities of hay, and as this all has to be brought up in the few available jeeps it means a corresponding reduction in other supplies. But it would be hard to carry on the war here for a day without them, for they carry everything—ammunition, water, food, clothing, and a hundred and one other things—needed by the men in the forward positions.

From Mule Base to the forward companies takes about three hours of slogging through the worst mud in the world. Even the mules sink up to their hocks. Wellington boots are useless; one either dislocates a joint trying to free them from a vice of mud or leaves the boots behind and goes on barefooted. Most people wear hobnail boots with sacking wound round their legs, and carry a stout staff. Even so, in the darkness, when one cannot pick one's way, one falls continually, and if it wasn't for the telephone wires one would easily get lost altogether.

I went forward with one mule train as far as it goes in daylight—the last part of the journey, which is under enemy observation, is made at night—and I can tell you that when I got back I was pretty exhausted, so you can imagine what it is like for the infantry carrying their arms and equipment. On this particular day there was a thick mountain mist, a not infrequent occurrence, which lent a rather macabre effect to the scene: the long line of mules, grunting and sweating, those in the rear shrouded by the mist; the persuasive cries of the Italian muleteers in their feathered Alpine hats; little, broken farms, with doleful children standing with wide, incurious eyes; abandoned German trenches strewn with rusting machine-gun belts—ground that our men had fought over not long before.

An almost eerie stillness hung over the rolling hills, over the ploughland and the vineyards and the sudden steep ravines, broken only by an occasional burst of machine-gun fire or the muffled thump of a gun. In the trenches and the farmhouses that are the front line the strain on such days must be intense, for one cannot see what is moving out there in the mist, and the nearest Bosche positions are only eight hundred yards away.

The worst problem is the evacuation of wounded. Not long ago an officer wounded in a night attack lay for eight hours in an area that was being heavily shelled before he was found. He had been conscious all that time with a compound fracture of the leg. It took a further eight hours to get him back on a stretcher to the nearest dressing-station, where he could receive comprehensive treatment. Somehow he survived the journey.

OUR DIARY OF THE WAR

January 3, Wednesday *1,950th day*

Western Front.—U.S. 1st Army launched attack in Grandmenil area of Ardennes salient.

Air.—Over 1,100 U.S. bombers attacked road and rail centres in Ruhr and Rhineland. R.A.F. Lancasters bombed oil plants near Dortmund.

Greece.—Gen. Plastiras formed new Greek government.

Burma.—Allied forced landed in Akyab, abandoned by Japanese.

Philippines.—U.S. troops landed on Marinduque Island.

Far East.—U.S. carrier-aircraft attacked Formosa and Ryukyu Islands for second day running. Super-Fortresses again bombed Nagoya, Japan.

January 4, Thursday *1,951st day*

Western Front.—U.S. 7th Army troops withdrawn from German soil between Sarreguemines and the Rhine.

Mediterranean.—Allied heavy bombers attacked rail yards on Brenner route.

Philippines.—35 Japanese ships sunk or damaged off Luzon. U.S. bombers attacked Clark airfield near Manila.

January 5, Friday *1,952nd day*

Western Front.—Announced that from Dec. 17 Field-Marshal Montgomery had assumed command of Allied armies (including U.S. 1st and 9th) north of German salient.

Air.—R.A.F. attacked German pocket near Bordeaux, and at night made heavy attack on Hanover. More than 1,500 U.S. bombers and fighters attacked rail centres from Cologne to Karlsruhe and from Siegfried Line to Frankfurt.

Philippines.—U.S. carrier force bombed Luzon; warships bombarded Kurile Is.

Poland.—Moscow announced that Soviet Govt. recognized Polish Provisional Govt in Lublin.

January 6, Saturday *1,953rd day*

Western Front.—German bridgeheads over Rhine near Strasbourg were counter-attacked.

Air.—U.S. bombers attacked road and rail bridges at Cologne and Bonn. R.A.F. attacked German troops near Houffalize by day, and rail centres of Hanau and Neuss at night.

Far East.—Super-Fortresses attacked Kyushu, southernmost Japanese island.

January 7, Sunday *1,954th day*

Air.—Over 1,650 U.S. bombers and fighters attacked railway yards and bridges in W. Germany. R.A.F. Spitfires bombed V 2 sites in Holland, and at night Lancasters attacked Munich, Hanover, Hanau and Nuremberg.

Russian Front.—N. W. of Budapest Russians evacuated Esztergom.

Burma.—Indian troops of 14th Army entered Shwebo.

Philippines.—U.S. aircraft bombed harbours and airfields on Luzon.

January 8, Monday *1,955th day*

Western Front.—German position on west bank of Maas eliminated by Allied troops.

Far East.—U.S. carrier-aircraft again bombed Formosa and Ryukyu Is., sinking or damaging 137 ships and 98 aircraft.

Pacific.—Announced that Australian troops had relieved Americans in Solomons, New Guinea and New Britain.

January 9, Tuesday *1,956th day*

Philippines.—Large U.S. forces landed on Luzon Island, in Lingayen Gulf.

Far East.—Super-Fortresses bombed industrial area of Tokyo and again attacked Formosa.

Sea.—Announced that in December, 1944, renewal of U-boat activity led to increased losses in Allied merchant shipping.

January 10, Wednesday *1,957th day*

Western Front.—In Ardennes salient Bure and Samree were taken by Allies after heavy fighting.

Air.—U.S. bombers attacked airfields, road and rail bridges in areas of Cologne, Bonn and Karlsruhe.

January 11, Thursday *1,958th day*

Western Front.—On north of Ardennes salient Allies captured Laroche, and on south St. Hubert was entered.

Far East.—Super-Fortresses from India made daylight attacks on docks and shipping in Singapore and Georgetown, Penang. U.S. carrier-aircraft sank 25 enemy ships and damaged 12 off Indo-China.

Greece.—Truce signed in Athens between Gen. Scobie, British G.O.C., and E.L.A.S. Central Committee.

January 12, Friday *1,959th day*

Western Front.—British patrols from north of salient joined up, in St. Hubert with U.S. troops from south.

Air.—Lancasters with 12,000 lb. bombs attacked U-boat shelters at Bergen.

Russian Front.—Red Army troops under Marshal Koniev opened offensive on Sandomierz front, south of Warsaw.

Sea.—Ships of Home Fleet wrecked German convoy off Norway.

January 13, Saturday *1,960th day*

Western Front.—U.S. 1st Army launched new attack south of Stavelot and Malmedy.

Air.—More than 1,300 U.S. aircraft attacked seven rail bridges across the Rhine. At night R.A.F. bombed oil plant at Politz, north of Stettin.

January 14, Sunday *1,961st day*

Western Front.—Allied troops cut Houffalize–St. Vith road near Cherain.

Air.—Over 1,750 U.S. bombers and fighters attacked oil plants and storage depots in Germany; 189 Luftwaffe aircraft destroyed. R.A.F. attacked by day V 2 sites in Holland, and at night bombed Leuna oil plant near Merseburg and fuel depot near Munster.

Russian Front.—Soviet troops of 1st White Russian Front under Marshal Zhukov launched offensive in central Poland.

Far East.—Super-Fortresses from Saipan attacked Japanese island of Honshu, and from China again bombed Formosa.

January 15, Monday *1,962nd day*

Western Front.—Allied patrols entered Houffalize.

Air.—Lancasters bombed benzol plants in Ruhr. U.S. bombers attacked railway yards in southern Germany.

Russian Front.—In southern Poland Koniev's troops captured Kielce.

Burma.—First China-bound convoy from Ledo reached Myitkyina, present terminus of Ledo Road.

January 16, Tuesday *1,963rd day*

Western Front.—British launched attack at Sittard against German salient east of the Maas. Troops of U.S. 1st and 3rd Armies met in Houffalize.

Air.—U.S. bombers attacked oil and tank plants at Dresden and Magdeburg.

Russian Front.—In central Poland Zhukov's forces captured Radom.

Far East.—U.S. carrier-aircraft made third consecutive attack on enemy shipping in China ports of Canton, Swatow and Hongkong.

Flash-backs

1940

January 8. Food rationing (of sugar, butter and bacon only) started in Britain.

1941

January 5. Bardia surrendered; over 30,000 Italian prisoners.

1942

January 10. Japanese invaded Celebes, Netherlands E. Indies.

January 12. In Libya South African troops captured Sollum.

1943

January 4. Caucasian centre of Nalchik recaptured by Russians.

January 14. Churchill and Roosevelt met at Casablanca, French Morocco, to plan enemy's "unconditional surrender."

1944

January 4. Russian offensive opened on Ukraine front.

January 11. Red Army opened offensive in White Russia.

January 15. Russian offensives on Leningrad and Novgorod fronts.

THE WAR IN THE AIR

by Capt. Norman Macmillan, M.C., A.F.C.

THIS war has been responsible for the introduction of new methods to solve old problems in aviation. Often these new ideas have been put into practical use long before security restrictions have allowed the public to be let into the secret. Three of these innovations have just been made "officially" known, and at least one has been "secretly" employed for at least two years. They are (1) the anti-blackout suit; (2) an aircraft equivalent of the dictaphone; and (3) a new flak curtain to protect aircrews.

The anti-blackout suit has been called in some reports a flying pressure suit. This is an erroneous term, because it might be confused with the pressure suits worn by Squadron Leader F. R. D. Swain and Flight-Lieut. M. J. Adam, of the R.A.F., who successively broke the world altitude record for aeroplanes in September 1936 and June 1937. Those were real pressure suits, worn with a circlip around the waist so that the pressure of the oxygen fed into the upper part would induce respiration in the high atmosphere where atmospheric pressure falls too low to "feed" normal breathing.

THE purpose of the anti-blackout suit is to maintain equilibrium in the blood-stream when an aircraft is manoeuvring, irrespective of height. When an aeroplane changes direction, loads are imposed on its structure and, naturally, on the persons flying in the aeroplane. The greatest loads occur when the aeroplane makes a fast turn or pulls out of a steep dive. The effect is to force the occupants down into their seats. The blood feels the pressure of this force, and the heart becomes unequal to the task of pumping the blood upward to the head against it. The result is brain anaemia, with loss of sight, until the force causing it is removed, when the vision returns to normal.

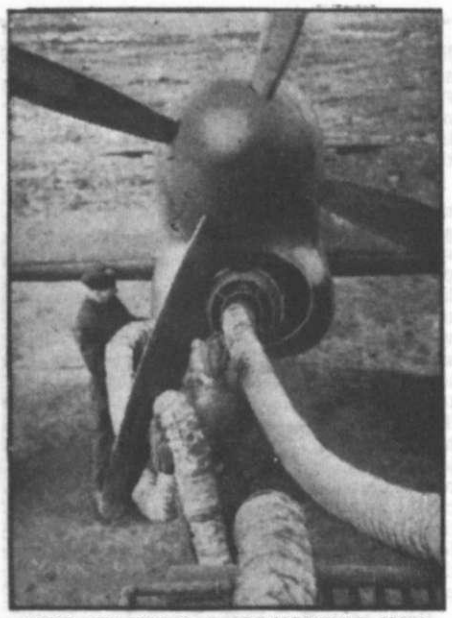
In war, fast manoeuvring with full competence of faculties is vital, and one anti-blackout suit was invented by Wing Commander W. R. Franks, of Toronto University. It is a rubber suit, filled with fluid in columns, and worn close to the body from feet to chest. The force exerted on the fluid drives it downward so that external pressure is automatically created around the lower limbs, and relieved around the torso, thus restoring an even balance of forces so that the heart functions normally. Pilots say it is quite comfortable and that they can make terrific pull-outs without noticing them. The American Berger suit, waist-high, is operated by air pressure fed to five airbags from the exhaust side of the vacuum pump. On January 11 a Mosquito shot a Me. 109 into the sea off Norway after making a terrifically fast turn inside the circle described by the Messerschmitt. A second Me. pilot who saw the phenomenal turn sped off to safety. It is possible that the Mosquito's aircrew were wearing anti-blackout suits.

OBSERVATIONS Dictated by Air-Crews Over Enemy Territory

All reconnaissance pilots and observers used to have to write notes. A midget recording apparatus has been invented so that they can "dictaphone" their information. A four-in. spool carries 11,500 feet of ·004 inch diameter wire. This wire records the voice from a microphone in the same way as on a gramophone record. Aircrews over enemy territory are able to dictate their observations, a much faster and therefore more accurate method than recording them by pencil on paper with a constant struggle to catch up with the trains, road transport, tanks, gun flashes and other items of military information that pass underwing.

The third device is an anti-flak curtain made of overlapping squares of manganese steel and able to stop a 20 millimetre cannon shell bursting two feet away. The curtains are placed in sheets and strips around crew stations in aircraft. They enable the heavy armour plates to be taken out of Fortresses, Liberators, Havocs and Marauders, and so enable them to carry bigger bomb loads. They were designed by Brig.-General Grow, chief surgeon to U.S. Strategic Air Forces in Europe, whose headquarters has recently moved to France to correlate the activities of the 8th and 15th Air Forces based in the U.K. and Italy.

Britain's Bomber Command has been returning to old targets. Gestapo headquarters in Oslo was again bombed by Mosquitoes on New Year's Eve. (First attack was on Sept. 25, 1942.) The Dortmund-Ems canal received its fourth breaching attack on Jan. 1, 1945; this was the first attack to be made in daylight against this target. Bomber Command "Mossies" have been lobbing 4,000-lb. bombs into railway tunnel entrances with good results as part of the anti-Rundstedt air plan.



HOT AIR FROM A PRE-HEATING VAN being pumped to the air intake and radiator of a R.A.F. Typhoon fighter-bomber during a bitter spell on a Dutch airfield in January 1945. *Photo, British Official*

For a long time convoy escort carriers have been Jekyll and Hyde ships, carrying 7,000 tons of grain in addition to aircraft. These converted merchant ships have done good work. News of them has just been released. Swordfish were their aircraft.

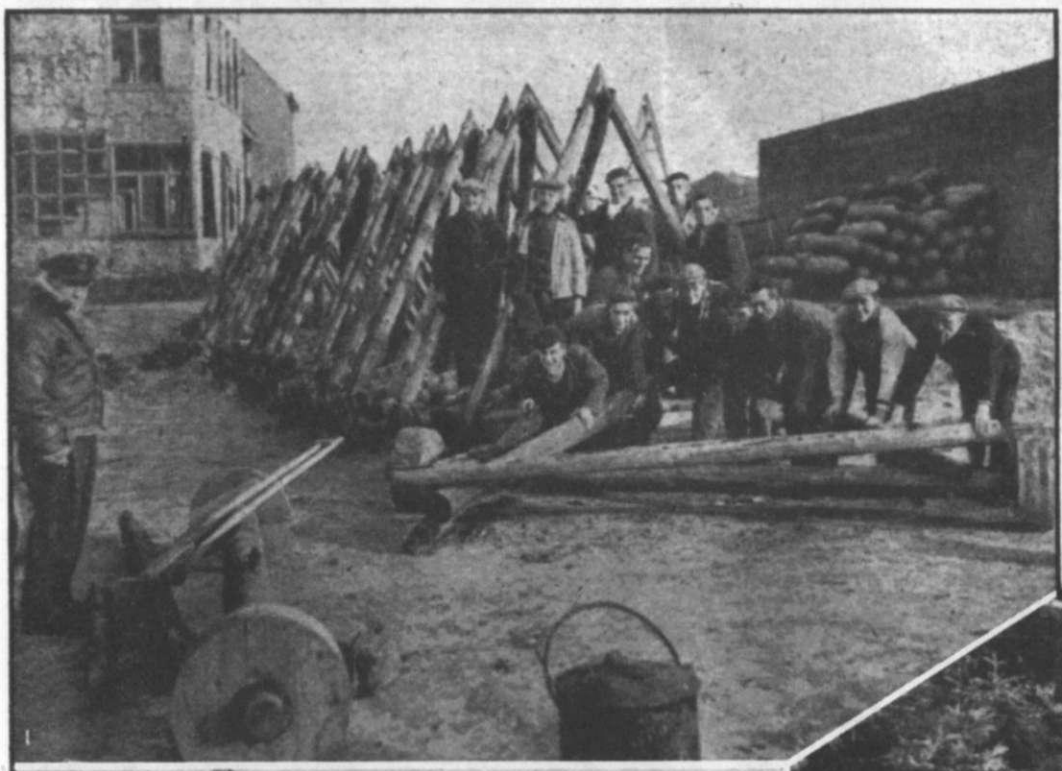
ON January 1, waves of German fighter bombers attacked Allied airfields on the Western Front. They effected a surprise and caught many aircraft on the ground or about to take off. German claims were 579 Allied aircraft destroyed, 400 on the ground. Allied counter-attack claims were 364 German planes destroyed out of about 500. The enemy were probably lucky in having the fog clear from their airfields first. They flew in low and down strip runways with blazing guns.

In Western Europe the Allied air forces have continued to attack enemy communications behind the front where fighting continued. U.S. bombers had dropped 13,250 U.S. tons on Cologne by January 10, more than they have unloaded on Berlin or any other city.

In Burma, Rathedaung was captured on Jan. 1, and Akyab on Jan. 3. Akyab should greatly aid the air offensive against the Japanese in lower Burma, as it provides a supply port and airfields. The Japanese air base of Iwojima in Bonin Islands was bombed for 24 consecutive days up to December 30, 1944, to neutralize counter air attacks against Super-Fortress bombers attacking Japan targets from the Marianas Islands; Guam is now the H.Q. of U.S. XXI Bomber Command. U.S. air attacks against tactical targets in Luzon island, Philippines, were followed by four assault landings on January 9. Enemy air attacks against this biggest Pacific convoy began three days out from the landing beaches of Lingayen, but few Japanese planes penetrated the defence screen round the ships. They lost 79 aircraft. Counter air attack was made against Formosa, Ryukyu islands, and French Indo-China Jap-occupied bases by carrier planes of the U.S. 3rd Fleet. Singapore naval base, and Georgetown (Penang) submarine base, were bombed on Jan. 11 by Super-Fortresses flying from India.

TOKYO-BOUND, AN 8,800-h.p. SUPER-FORTRESS takes off on its 2,600-mile ocean flight from Saipan in the Mariana Islands of the Pacific. Raids on the Japanese capital by Saipan-based aircraft began in late Nov. 1944. Flying more than 3,500 miles, from a base in India, Fortresses bombed Singapore Island in daylight on Jan. 11, 1945. *Photo, Planet News*

With the 2nd Tactical Air Force of the R.A.F.

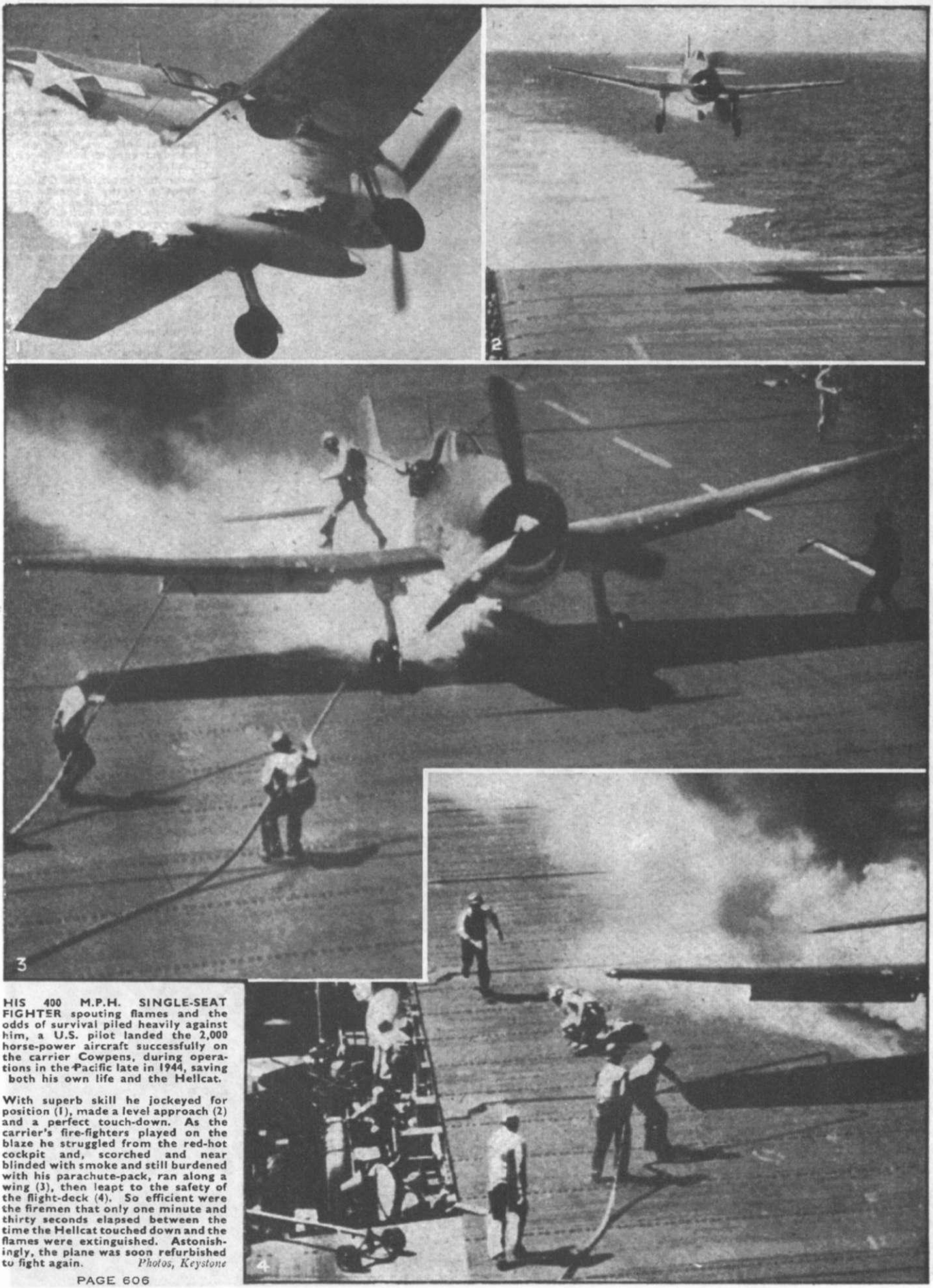


AIRFIELD OBSTACLES—wooden tripods mounted on wheels—were designed by the Germans to prevent the landing of Allied glider forces as we advanced in Holland and Belgium: workers, under the supervision of a R.A.F. officer, assisted in their removal (1). The enemy left these anti-tank weapons (3) behind them on an abandoned Dutch airfield; resembling the bazooka, they are fitted with fins which open on being fired.

Surprising factor in the German offensive in the Ardennes was the come-back staged by the Luftwaffe. It did not last long, however. On January 1, 1945, Allied fighters and A.A. guns shot down 364 enemy aircraft during violent attacks on our airfields. With another 81 probably destroyed, the Luftwaffe thus sustained its greatest one-day loss of the war. The 2nd Tactical Air Force of the R.A.F. magnificently helped to stem the enemy advance: loading up Typhoons with 1,000-pound bombs (2 and 4) on a captured airfield.

Photos, Fox Photos

Blazing Hellcat Roars Home—to Fight Again



HIS 400 M.P.H. SINGLE-SEAT FIGHTER spouting flames and the odds of survival piled heavily against him, a U.S. pilot landed the 2,000 horse-power aircraft successfully on the carrier Cowpens, during operations in the Pacific late in 1944, saving both his own life and the Hellcat.

With superb skill he jockeyed for position (1), made a level approach (2) and a perfect touch-down. As the carrier's fire-fighters played on the blaze he struggled from the red-hot cockpit and, scorched and near blinded with smoke and still burdened with his parachute-pack, ran along a wing (3), then leapt to the safety of the flight-deck (4). So efficient were the firemen that only one minute and thirty seconds elapsed between the time the Hellcat touched down and the flames were extinguished. Astonishingly, the plane was soon refurbished to fight again. *Photos, Keystone*

Editor's Postscript

THAT oil has been worked in England for some time past and that we are now obtaining 375 tons a day from our own wells for the use of the Forces, is good news. It surprised most people—indeed almost everybody, for the secret of the little Nottinghamshire village where the oil-field is centred has been a well-kept one up till now. Eakring the village is called, and it used to be mainly agricultural, with mining taking second place. Now about a thousand men are employed on the 238 oil-wells in the vicinity. Since the outbreak of war about 78 million gallons have been produced there. The first oil-field I saw—it was in South Russia—made me think that a town must have been wiped out by fire. The whole landscape was filled with tall poles, forming the derricks, which are necessary for the boring of a well; and all the oil-fields I have seen since in various parts of the world have had the same desolate, sinister appearance. Fortunately, this area of our countryside is not thus disfigured; all that can be observed are the leisurely-moving arms of electrically-operated pumps (dotted occasionally about the fields) bringing the crude petroleum to the surface, with cows grazing contentedly on the surrounding pasturage.

I CANNOT pretend to feel much commiseration for Germans whose cities and towns are bombed. They gloated when we were the victims of their raids on this country, and the only way to cure that sort of savagery is to give them a dose themselves, and a good stiff one. But I must admit to being sorry when I hear of beautiful places I have known being devastated and smashed. Bonn, for instance, was in the news the other day as having been heavily bombed, and I found it hard to imagine the serenity of that university town being shattered by four-thousand-pounders. Built on the banks of the Rhine, with all its streets lined with trees, and with graceful modern blocks among the old ones that were lovingly preserved, it has always remained in my mind as a home of ancient peace. About Budapest, of which there cannot be much left, I do not feel the same at all. The old city of Buda, with its palaces and wooded heights overlooking the Danube had a charm of past greatness, but the modern Pest on the other side of the river was garish, artificial, over-sophisticated. It was the creation of a ruling caste without ideas of their own and without the taste to imitate the best in architecture. For it I feel no regret.

I HAVE received already a mass of propaganda from a London Committee representing the rival Polish Government which has been set up at Lublin since its liberation by the Russians and which has the backing of the Soviet authorities. Its aim is, of course, to persuade those who wade through it that Codlin is the friend not Short. The Polish nation is said to be behind the Lublin Cabinet and to have no use whatever for the one that has had its headquarters in London for the past five years. Equally, of course, this latter body claims to have the support of the Polish people. What would be the result of a plebiscite, no one can say.

I LISTENED to an animated discussion between two acquaintances of mine on the question, started by letters in The Times, whether it would be a good or a bad thing to keep on Identity Cards after the war. One argued that this would be a monstrous interference with the liberty of the subject, and also that no useful purpose would be served. The other maintained it would be most useful to make everyone carry about a history of his or her life: he wanted, you see, to expand the present card, which does not even state the age of the holder, into a record that would include honours and convictions, successes and failures, offices held and countries travelled through or lived in. To this it was replied that no self-respecting person would consent willingly to have his career thus laid bare. The retort was that if there were nothing to be ashamed of in it, no loss of respect need be felt. I did not take part in the controversy. I do not think there is any likelihood of the life-history idea developing. On the other hand I should be surprised if the present Identity Cards were to be given up, though I cannot find confirmation of the statement by one of The Times letter-writers that they are marked as being available till 1960.

ONE is accustomed to shortages of so many kinds that I suppose I ought not to have been astonished when I was told in a big men's outfitting shop, "We have no pocket-handkerchiefs, sir, I am sorry to say." Yet somehow one does not think it possible that the manufacture of such absolute necessaries, which are so small and require so little raw material, could be interrupted. One explanation offered was that "it's just after Christmas, you see, and so many handkerchiefs were bought as presents." Like all other articles that have to be "sent to the wash," they have nowadays much shorter lives than they had formerly. The way laundry machines tear clothes to pieces used to be a joke; now it is a tragedy. Fortunately we are just at the beginning of a new coupon period, so it is possible to replace some of the shirts that are returned in tatters; but even so the difficulty of keeping a shirt on one's back is formidable. In those countries where washing of clothes is done by washerwomen who come in for a couple of days a month and clear it all up, clothes last three times as long. No machinery for them!

Lieut.-Gen. SIR MONTAGUE STOPFORD, commanding the 33rd Indian Corps, knighted by Lord Wavell, the Viceroy of India, in the name of the King, watched the decoration ceremony at Imphal on December 15, 1944.
Photo, British Official

POST-WAR visitors to Paris may well bless General de Gaulle for the request he has just made to the local authorities. While, as he says, he is "very appreciative of these expressions of recognition," he does not favour the use of his name to designate public thoroughfares. Immediately after the last war, the French—especially in the small towns of the *Midi* and the south—had a passion for renaming their streets and squares after some local nine-days' war hero, to the bewilderment of visitors accustomed to the age-old nomenclature and the detriment of shopkeepers. I, for one, hope that the General's hint will be taken through the length and breadth of France and not merely in Paris alone. While South America, as can be imagined, tops the list when it comes to a quick-change in street names, nearer home in neutral Eire they have made confusion even worse confounded by renaming streets after I.R.A. "heroes" whose names—in their Gaelic spelling—are not only meaningless to the bulk of the population but unpronounceable. And yet a few years ago when it was proposed to rename a back street in Dublin—actually it was his birthplace—after John Field, the Irish composer who invented the Nocturne and inspired Chopin, the Corporation turned it down—because someone discovered that the composer's grandfather on his mother's side had been English. In other words, as Goebbels would have it, he wasn't pure Eireann!

IT surprised me that until recently no one thought of Hitler's later speeches as being refabricated from old gramophone records—which is what some of the papers have been saying. The notion that there is something new in the piecing together and editing of a speech from bits and pieces of previous records of the same speaker—or that it is of German origin—will amuse those who know anything of the film business or the recording work of the B.B.C. The most remarkable piece of editing of this kind may now be told. It occurred during the Proclamation of the then Prince of Wales as King Edward VIII. During the reading of the proclamation outside one of the royal palaces, where the B.B.C. recording van was in attendance, a cannon went off unexpectedly. The elderly Court official "fluffed" his "script," as the actors say, and apart from nearly falling off the tasselled dais, made such a mess of his words that when the record was played over at Broadcasting House not a single sentence was in its proper order. But the Recorded Programmes Department weren't to be beaten. Within a few hours they had made something like sixty copies of that unintelligible jumble record, and from them (with the aid of a copy of the Proclamation) had placed together one complete record with the words in the correct order—all in time for the six o'clock news!

IN its sixth year the war still brings us odd surprises—on the home no less than on the battle fronts. A friend has been telling me of a strange and wonderful sight he saw recently in his Thames-side garden—the bomb-torn and bark-stripped branch of an ancient chestnut tree which, though wrenched from its parent-trunk and in mid-winter, had put forth its pink-and-white "candles." In the heart of London too, Nature, I notice, has been up to strange tricks. Shortly after a flying-bomb had beheaded the plane trees that make almost a boulevard of our Kingsway and Aldwych, their mutilated trunks were vigorously sprouting leaves once more. Though the plane tree came here from the Lebanon only two-and-a-half centuries ago it has already taken on the resilient character the true Cockney. When its bark becomes encrusted with soot and grime it sheds it and goes on growing as if nothing had happened—just like your Londoner in wartime!

Shattered Relic of Rundstedt's Offensive

GERMAN MOBILE GUN, camouflaged with fir branches, spangled with frost and wrecked, was found abandoned in the Ardennes after Field-Marshal Montgomery, temporarily commanding the U.S. 1st and 9th Armies in addition to British and Canadian Armies, had halted the northern flank of the German thrust towards the Meuse, in early January 1945. Before leaving the weapon the enemy blew out the muzzle. It is of the 88-mm. type, as employed extensively by the Afrika Korps in Libya; originally intended for A.A. purposes it was later adapted to fire at any angle. *Photo, British Official*

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